

Kiss Me
at the Stroke of
Midnight

vol.

1

Rin Mikimoto



★Kiss Me★
★at the Stroke of★
★Midnight★



R i n M i k i m o t o

I

C O N T E N T S

S T O R Y . 1

Someone Who Lives in a Different World

003

S T O R Y . 2

So Pleased to Make Your Acquaintance

100

S T O R Y . 3

Even Though You're Mine

149



HE...



**...IS SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN A WORLD
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM MINE.**

STORY . I

Someone Who Lives in a Different World



GREETINGS ①

NICE TO MEET YOU, OR LONG TIME NO SEE.

HELLO! I'M RIN MIKIMOTO.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BUYING VOLUME 1 OF *KISS ME AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT*. IN JAPANESE, IT'S CALLED, *GOZEN 0-JI, KISS SHI NI KITEYO*.

THAT'S QUITE A TITLE, ISN'T IT?

I FEEL LIKE MY EDITOR AND I CONSIDERED OVER 50 DIFFERENT TITLE IDEAS. AND THIS UNEXPECTED ONE WAS THE WINNER.

AT FIRST, "CANDY" WAS THE MOST LIKELY CONTENDER FOR THE TITLE.

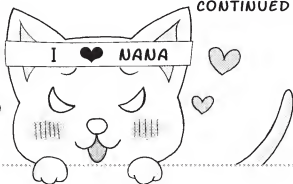
IT WAS MEANT AS A SARCASTIC JOKE—THE KIND OF TITLE LUMINE (A JAPANESE DEPARTMENT STORE) MIGHT USE IN AN ADVERTISEMENT. I WAS THE ONE WHO CAME UP WITH IT, BUT WHEN I THOUGHT OVER IT AGAIN, THE TITLE SOUNDED SUPER EMBARRASSING! SO I FIGURED MAYBE WE COULD CALL IT "ZERO KISS" FOR SHORT.

ANYWAY, THIS IS A LOVE STORY BETWEEN A CELEBRITY AND A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL—THE BIG LEAGUES OF ROMANTIC COMEDIES! A COUPLE YEARS AGO, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN LAID A HAND ON A STORY LIKE THIS. BUT NOW, IT'S JUST PERFECT FOR ME.

I'M GONNA WORK HARD SO THAT EVERYONE CAN ENJOY THE STORY. I HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

CONTINUED IN ②

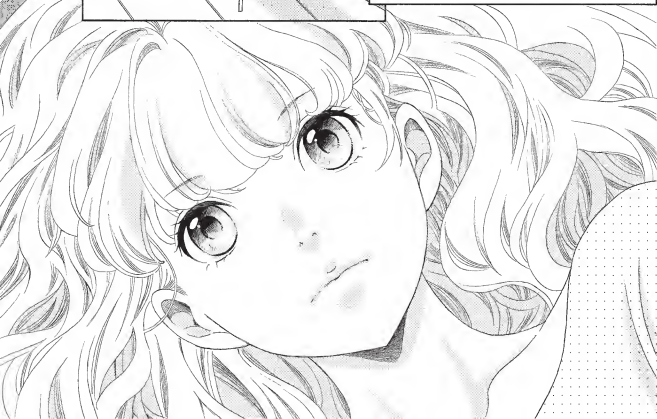
MY FAVORITE
ACTRESS
IS NANA
KOMATSU-CHAN.
I'M OBSESSED!



**EVERY
DAY OF MY
LIFE RUNS
ON A SET
SCHEDULE.**



BEEP





**GOOD
MORNING,
EVERYONE.**

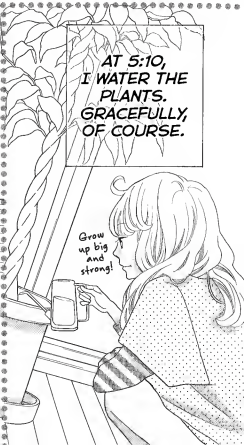
**MY NAME
IS HINANA
HANAZAWA.**

**YEP, I
WOKE UP
AT EXACTLY
5 AM TODAY,
JUST LIKE
ALWAYS.**

SHINE



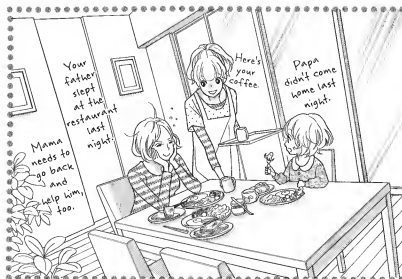
**AT 6:30,
I DO MY RADIO
CALISTHENICS.
VIGOROUSLY,
OF COURSE.**



**AT 5:10,
I WATER THE
PLANTS.
GRACEFULLY,
OF COURSE.**

**NEXT, I
REVIEW MY
STUDIES.**

Grow
up big
and
strong!



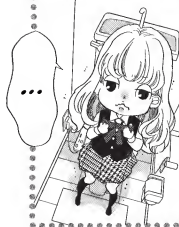
Your father slept at the restaurant last night.

Mama needs to go back and help him, too.

Here's your coffee.

Papa didn't come home last night.

**AFTER THAT,
I PREP
BREAKFAST
(IN PLACE OF
MY PARENTS,
WHO ARE BUSY
MANAGING
THEIR
RESTAURANT).**



...

**...WHILE
TAKING
CARE OF
BUSINESS.**

**THEN,
I TIDY
UP...**



**AT 7:20,
I'M OFF TO
SCHOOL.**

NANA!



MORNIN'!

AH-CHAN!
RUN-CHAN!

THANKS
FOR
WAITING.



Wait.
Then you
should be
joining
us all
the
time.

We're all
in different
classes, so I can
only see you guys
during lunch. Of
course I'm gonna
show up from
time to
time!

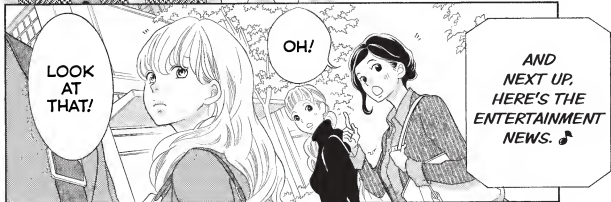
THIS IS A
SURPRISE.
YOU'RE
USUALLY
LATER THAN
US, RUN-
CHAN.

I'VE KNOWN
AH-CHAN SINCE
CHILDHOOD,
AND RUN-
CHAN IS MY
BEST FRIEND
FROM MIDDLE
SCHOOL.

THESE
TWO ARE
MY VERY
BEST
FRIENDS.

SHUT UP,
AKIRA.

SERIOUSLY!
RUN IS LIKE
THE POSTER-
CHILD FOR
LATENESS.



LOOK
AT
THAT!

OH!

AND
NEXT UP,
HERE'S THE
ENTERTAINMENT
NEWS. 🎵

THE INSIDE
SCOOP ON
THE MOVIE
STARRING
KAEDE AYASE
(AGE 24)!

Security
Police
protecting
a young
woman.

FILM
ADAPTION

MY BROTHER

WOW,
IT'S
KAEDE!



...



EVER
SINCE LEAVING
THE BOY BAND,
"FUNNY BONE,"
AYASE-SAN HAS
KEPT HIMSELF
VERY BUSY.

WITH HIS
ANGELIC
FACE AND
TREMENDOUS
ACTING SKILLS,
HE'S HIGHLY
SOUGHT AFTER
BY EVERYONE IN
THE INDUSTRY. ♪



THE MOVIE
BEGAN
FILMING IN
THE CITY
LAST WEEK.
AND...

WHAT'S
WRONG?
YOU STAR-
STRUCK?
I THOUGHT
YOU DIDN'T
CARE ABOUT
CELEBS!

HINANA.

OOH,
A KAEDE
MOVIE!



...

I REMEMBER
YOU TELLING ME
HOW LIKE, ALL
HOT GUYS ASIDE,
YOU'RE NOT EVEN
INTERESTED IN
RELATIONSHIPS
RIGHT NOW.

OH,
THAT.

YUP,
THAT'S
OUR
NANA.

NO.
I WAS
JUST
THINKING
ABOUT HOW
I READ THE
BOOK THAT
IT'S BASED
ON.

**THAT'S
RIGHT.**

YEAH.

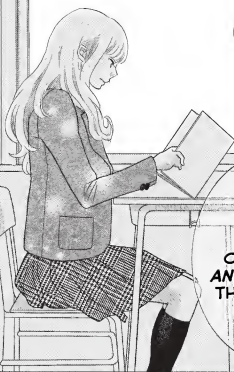
HANAZAWA-
SAN IS
READING A
COMPLICATED
BOOK AGAIN.

OH.

*The Protestant Ethic
and the Spirit of Capitalism*
BY MAX WEBER

**BECAUSE
I'M A
VERY
SERIOUS
PERSON.**

OH,
WOW.

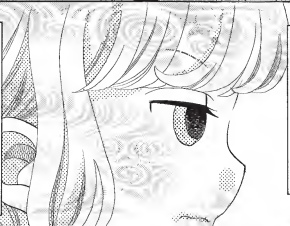
A black and white illustration of a young woman with long, wavy hair, wearing a dark jacket and a plaid skirt, sitting at a desk in a classroom and reading a book. The scene is framed by several speech bubbles containing text.

**SHE
MAKES
SURE THE
BLACKBOARD
IS SPARKLING
CLEAN
DURING
BREAKS,
TOO.**

**SHE'S
TRULY AN
HONORS
STUDENT.**

**SHE'S
REALLY
THE
PERFECT
HIGH
SCHOOL
GIRL.**

**SHE'S
SMART.
SHE'S A
CLASS REP.
AND SHE'S ON
THE STUDENT
COUNCIL.**

A close-up, black and white illustration of a young woman's face, looking slightly to the side with a subtle, enigmatic smile. Her hair is long and wavy.

**...IS THE
KIND OF LIFE
I LEAD, WHERE
EVERYONE
SHOWERS ME
WITH HIGH
PRAISE.**

**AND
THAT...**

A black and white illustration of the same young woman from the first panel, now smiling broadly while sitting at her desk and reading a book. The scene is framed by two speech bubbles.

**THE
TRUTH
IS...**

**...THAT'S
ALSO THE
REASON
I KEEP A
MODEST
LITTLE
SECRET TO
MYSELF.**

A large, black and white graphic of a spiral, resembling a lullaby or a hypnotic pattern, filling the right side of the page.

HOWEVER...

...I FANTASIZE ABOUT...



The prince
danced with
Cinderella
while gazing
deeply into
her eyes.
It was so
much fun,
like something
out of a
dream.

...DATING HOT BOYS.



I
CAN'T
TELL
ANYONE
ABOUT
THIS
STUFF.



...AND
THEN WE
LIVE HAPPILY
EVER AFTER!!
THAT KIND OF
THING!

...APPEARS
BEFORE ME
LIKE A PRINCE
AND FALLS
IN LOVE WITH
ME AT FIRST
SIGHT...

A HANDSOME
YOUNG MAN
THAT ANYONE
WOULD ENVY...



**IT'S
SUPER
CRAZY!**

**HEY,
THERE'S
NEWS!
BIG
NEWS!**

**BESIDES,
THE WHOLE
THING IS
JUST A
FANTASY
OF MINE.**



**KAEDE
IS
COMING
HERE!**

**WE
HEARD
THE
TEACHERS
WHISPERING
IN THE
FACULTY
ROOM
JUST
NOW!**

HUH?



**KAEDE
AYASE IS
COMING
HERE TO
FILM HIS
MOVIE!!**

**HE'LL
BE AT OUR
SCHOOL,
STARTING
TOMORROW!**



LOOKS
LIKE THEY'RE
ONLY GONNA
FILM DURING THE
BREAK, SO WE
WON'T GET TO
SEE ANY
OF IT.

YEAH,
BUT ISN'T
TOMORROW
THE START OF
OUR GOLDEN
WEEK BREAK?!

**NO
WAY!
FOR
REAL?!**

**WE CAN
JUST COME
TO SCHOOL
ANYWAY!!
WE'LL GET TO
SEE KAEDE
IN THE
FLESH!!**

2-2

GYAAH

OH
MY GOD!
THAT'S SO
AMAZING!

<MESSAGES> RUN ISOYAMA SENDER

Can you leave your
classroom for a second?

!

I-
I WANT
TO SEE
HIM, BUT
PEOPLE
WILL THINK
IT'S WEIRD
IF I SHOW
UP.

**THE
KAEDE
AYASE?!**

**BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ**



IT WOULD
BE HARD
TO TALK
ABOUT THIS
WITH OTHER
PEOPLE
AROUND.

HM?

THE
STUDENT
COUNCIL
PRESIDENT
AND I WERE
CALLED IN
EARLIER.

YEAH,
WHAT'S
GOING ON?
WHY DID
YOU WANT
TO TALK
HERE?

DID
YOU
HEAR
ABOUT
THE
MOVIE?

ALONG
WITH
EVERYONE
ELSE IN THE
STUDENT
COUNCIL.

THEY
ASKED
US TO BE
EXTRAS
IN THE
MOVIE.

IT WOULD BE
TOMORROW,
WITH THE
NEXT DAY OFF,
AND THEN
CONTINUING
ON THE
THIRD
DAY.

I GUESS
THEY CHOSE
US SO IT
WOULDN'T BE
TOO HECTIC.

The Vice President,
despite what you
might think!

APPARENTLY,
THERE WERE
SOME SUDDEN
OPENINGS AND
THEY NEEDED
MORE PEOPLE,
SO THE STUDIO
ASKED US.

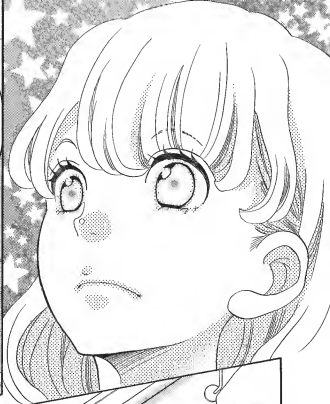
Secretary



I'LL
DO IT.

I'M
JUST A LOWLY
FANGIRL, SO
I'M OBVIOUSLY
GONNA DO IT.
BUT YOU?
NOT SO MUCH,
RIGHT?

SO,
WHAT
DO YOU
WANNA
DO?



BUT
DON'T
YOU HAVE
TO TAKE
CARE OF
YOUR
SISTER?

A
JOB WAS
REQUESTED
OF ME.
I CAN'T
TURN IT
DOWN.

REALLY?

WHAT?



HUZZAH
!!!

SURE,
THAT
WORKS,
THEN.

OH, THAT?
MY GRANDMA
WAS PLANNING
ON COMING
OVER ANYWAY.
IT'LL BE FINE.



HE ALWAYS
MAKES THE
LIST FOR
"CELEBRITIES
WE WANT TO
DATE."

AND HE'S
THE FIRST
JAPANESE
PERSON TO
MAKE IT INTO
THE TOP 8
FOR "THE
WORLD'S MOST
BEAUTIFUL
FACES."

KAEDE
AYASE...

BOYS WE WANT TO DATE



I WONDER
WHAT HE'S
LIKE...



...BUT
I GET TO
MEET A
REAL, LIVE
HOT-GUY!

I'M NOT
EXACTLY
A FAN OF
HIS...

52
more
seconds.

No,
you
can't.

Can
I get
out
now?

8 PM IS BATH TIME.

CHATTER

CHATTER



JUST AS EXPECTED,
THE PEOPLE
WHO FIGURED
IT OUT
SHOWED UP.

YEAH.

I wanna
see!
Meanie!

...



YEAH,
WE'RE WAY
MORE INTO
HIM THAN
THEY ARE.
IT'S NOT
FAIR!

HOW
COME
ONLY THE
STUDENT
COUNCIL
GETS TO
GO IN?

Costumes

NO,
YOU
CAN'T
GO ANY
FURTHER!



I HOPE
THEY
DON'T
BOTHER
US
LATER...

REALLY?

UGH.

THOSE
GIRLS FROM
CLASS-5 ARE
INTENSE
KAEDE FANS.

LIBRARY

CAN ALL THE EXTRAS PLEASE GO TO THEIR ASSIGNED AREAS AND BE ON STANDBY?

AYASE-SAN WILL BE HERE SOON!

WOW, I'M GETTING NERVOUS.

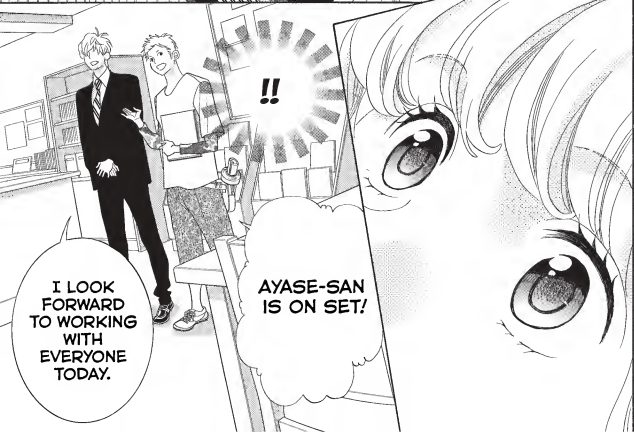
↖ Pretending to look for a book

OH, I'M SOR-

NO...

I WONDER WHICH SIDE HE'LL WALK IN FROM.

BUMP





WHOA.



**IT'S
A REAL,
LIVE
PRINCE!**

**OKAY,
LET'S
GET
STARTED.**

**WOW,
WOW,
WOW!**



**I DON'T
NEED A
LUNCH BREAK!
I WANT TO GO
BACK RIGHT
NOW!**

**BEING IN
THE SAME ROOM
AS A GUY THAT HOT
IS PURE HEAVEN!
THERE'S NO WAY
HE'S A MORTAL
LIKE THE REST
OF US.**

**OH,
MY GOD...
IT'S TOO
MUCH!**



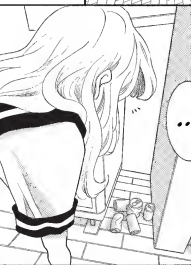
WHAT A
WASTE!
GET A
GOOD
LOOK AT
HIM!

UGH!

O-
OH, REALLY?

I DIDN'T
REALLY GET A
GOOD LOOK
AT HIM, SO I
DON'T KNOW.

...



HUH?
RIGHT
NOW?!

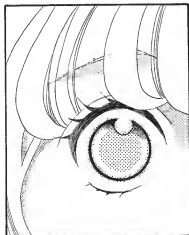
I FOUND
SOME EMPTY
CANS, SO I'M
GOING TO GO
THROW THEM
AWAY.

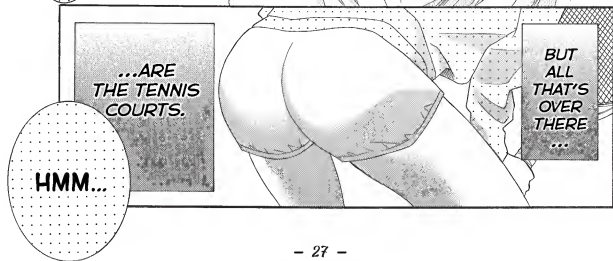


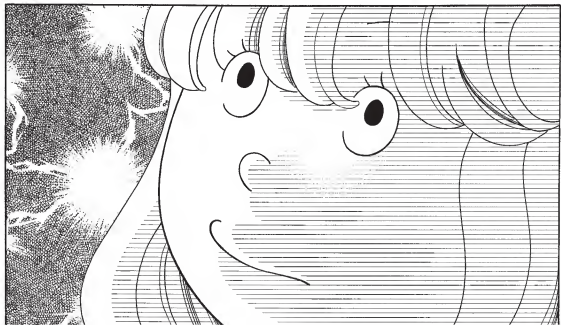
You can
start
heading
to the
classroom.



← Unable to just
let things go.







IT'D
BE EVEN
BETTER IF
I COULD
SEE THEIR
PANTIES.

HM?



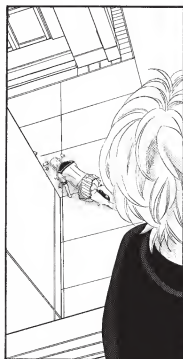
DRIP
“/”
“/”
“/”



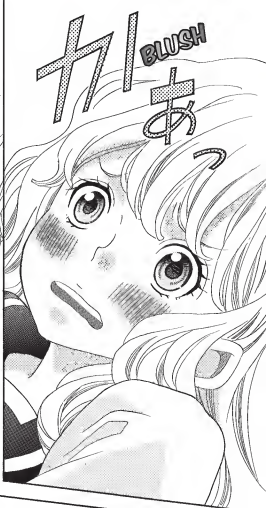
YEAH,
THAT
MUST
BE IT!!



I-
I-
I MUST
HAVE
MISHEARD
HIM!!







LIBRARY

NO WAYYYY!



KAEDE-KUN.

HE'S
INTO
BUTTS...
A BUTT
ALIEN?

I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT.
BUT HE'S
SO GOOD-
LOOKING?!



IS
HE A
CREEP?



I'M
SORRY.

I WAS
PRACTICING
MY LINES
SOMEWHERE
QUIET.



FOR
REAL?

KAEDE-
KUN,
YOU'RE
ALWAYS
DISAP-
PEARING.

WHERE'D
YOU GO?
I WANTED TO
EAT LUNCH
WITH YOU,
MAN!



OH,
SO THAT'S
WHAT IT
WAS. I'M
SO GLAD!

I'm
so silly.



ALL
RIGHT,
GUYS.
HERE
WE
GO!



Not
at all.

The
high
school
girls didn't
spot
you?

HUH?

THEN
THAT
STUFF
HE SAID
WAS...?

HIS
LINES?

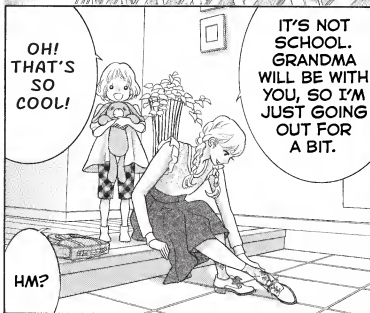


OKAY,
THAT'S IT
FOR THE
EXTRAS.
GOOD
JOB.

YOU HAVE
TOMORROW
OFF, BUT
WE'LL SEE
YOU AGAIN
THE DAY
AFTER.



'CAUSE
HE'S A
PRINCE,
OBVIOUSLY!



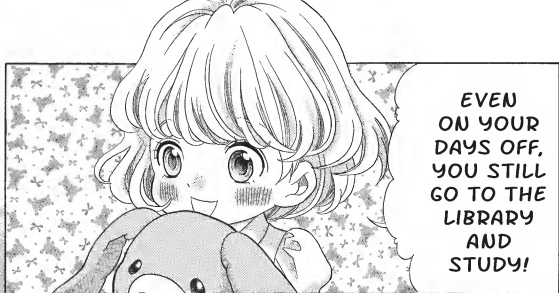
OH!
THAT'S
SO
COOL!

IT'S NOT
SCHOOL.
GRANDMA
WILL BE WITH
YOU, SO I'M
JUST GOING
OUT FOR
A BIT.

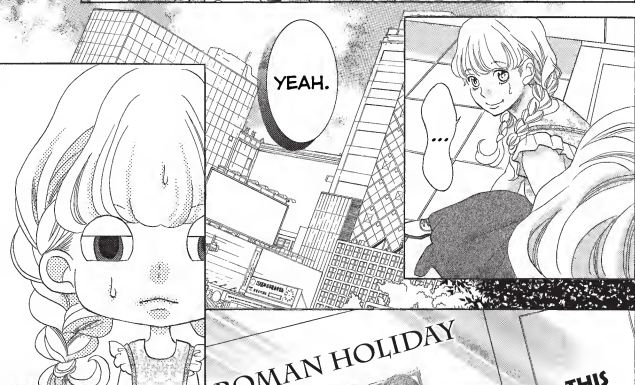
HM?



NANA-
CHAN,
YOU HAVE
SCHOOL
AGAIN
TODAY?

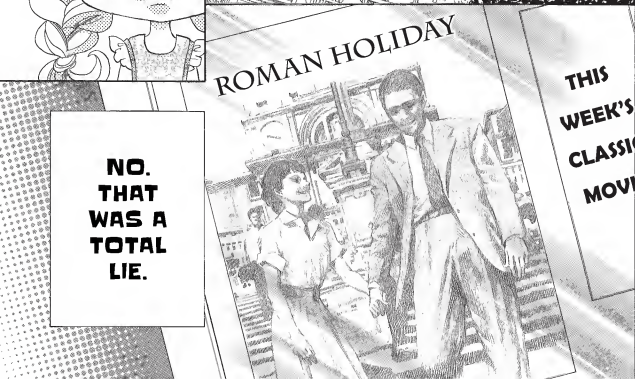


EVEN
ON YOUR
DAYS OFF,
YOU STILL
GO TO THE
LIBRARY
AND
STUDY!



YEAH.

...



ROMAN HOLIDAY

THIS
WEEK'S
CLASSIC
MOVIE

NO.
THAT
WAS A
TOTAL
LIE.

THIS
IS WHAT
I ALWAYS
DO WHEN
I HAVE NO
PLANS...

I
PRETEND
TO BE
STUDYING,
BUT I'M
REALLY JUST
WATCHING
ROMANTIC
MOVIES
INSTEAD.

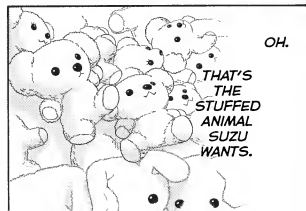
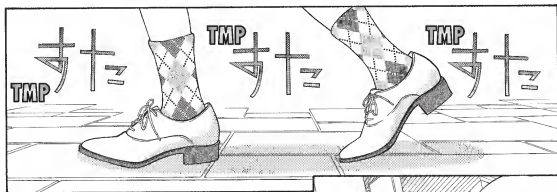
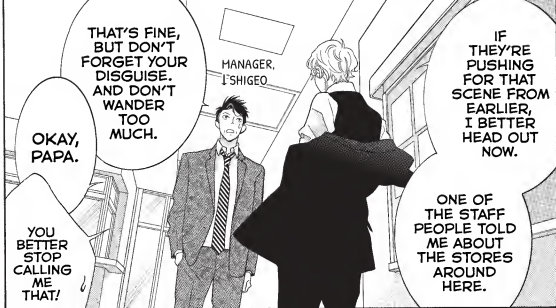
I LIKE
THIS MOVIE
THEATER
BECAUSE
IT'S SMALL
AND THERE
AREN'T MANY
PEOPLE.

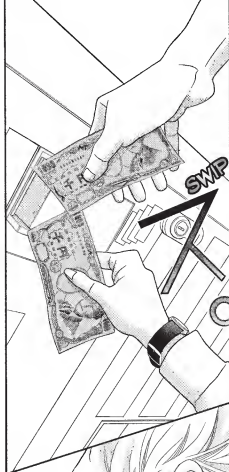
...BECAUSE
I FEEL LIKE
I'M REALLY
EXPERIENCING
EVERYTHING
THAT HAPPENS
ON THE
SCREEN.

SHIGE-
CHAN.

CAN I
GO GET
SOMETHING
TO EAT
NOW?



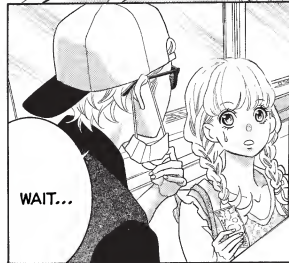
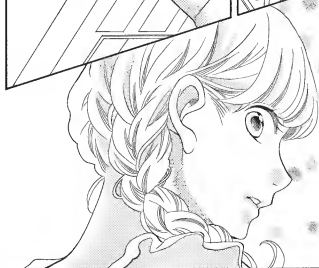




SHE'LL
BE SO
HAPPY IF
I GET IT
FOR HER.

MAYBE
I CAN
WIN IT.

CHANGE
MACHINE

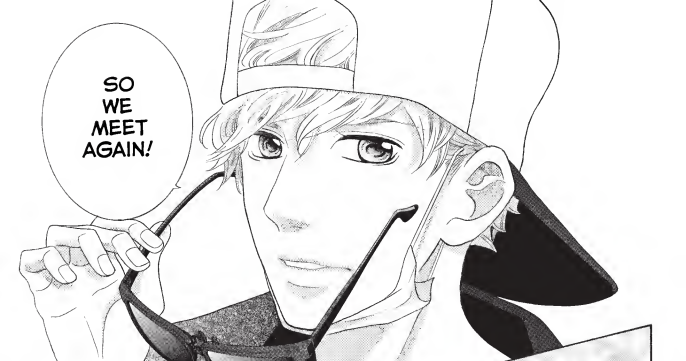


WAIT...

OH.

SORRY,
GO
AHEAD.





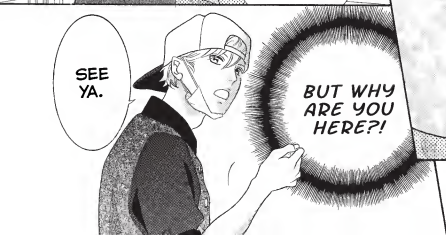
SO
WE
MEET
AGAIN!



OKAY,
I'LL GO
FIRST.

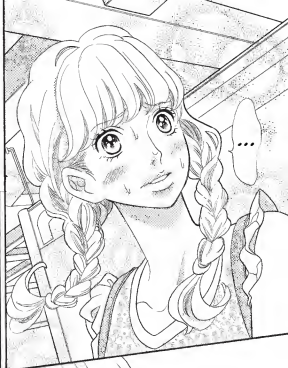
?!
?

I'M ON
BREAK, SO
I THOUGHT
I'D STOP BY
THE ARCADE.
WHAT'RE THE
ODDS, HUH?



SEE
YA.

BUT WHY
ARE YOU
HERE?!



**PANTY-FLASH
SERIES**

FIGURE #2

**Cheer-
leader
Edition**

**PANTY-FLASH
SERIES**

FIGURE #1

**PANTY-FLASH
SERIES**

FIGURE #1

CHEER LEADER

**PANTY-FLASH
SERIES**

FIGURE #1

**A PANTY-FLASH
CHEERLEADER
FIGURE.**

CHEER LEADER

**PANTY-FLASH
SERIES**

FIGURE #1

**AWESOME!
I'VE BEEN
WANTING
THIS ONE
FOR A
WHILE.**

**WANNA
SEE?**

?!

BOING



THIS
FORM IS
REALLY
NICE!

THE HEFT,
THE CURVE,
THE SOFTNESS—
IT'S FLAWLESS!

THIS...



...THIS ISN'T HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE...



**THIS
IS THE
REAL
AYASE?**



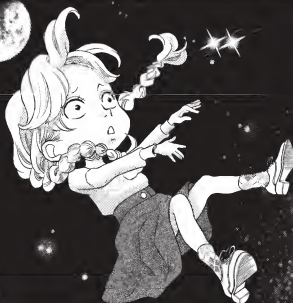
**I THOUGHT
THAT EVEN IN
PRIVATE, HE
WOULD SPEND
HIS TIME IN
GLAMOROUS
AND COOL
WAYS.**

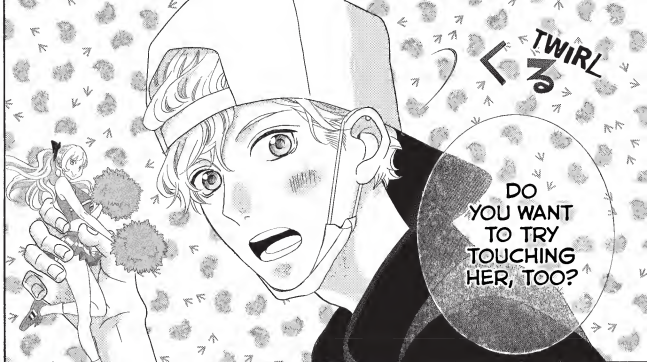


**...FROM
PLANET
BUTT!**

**HE
WAS
ACTUALLY
A BUTT
ALIEN...**

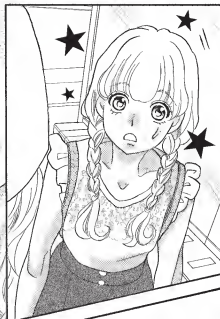
OH!





I
CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT.

HE'S
NOT EVEN
CONCERNED
ABOUT WHAT
PEOPLE
MIGHT THINK
OF HIM?



I
CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT.

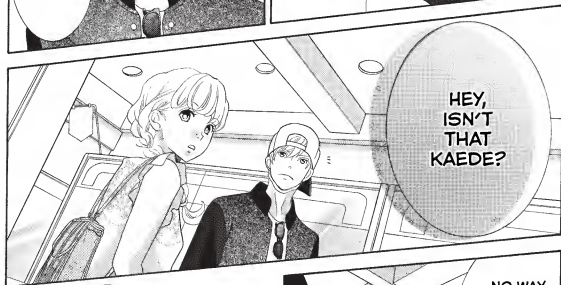
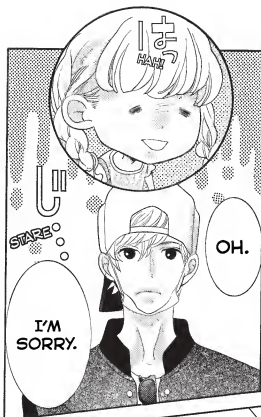
PFFT.



I'M NOT
TOUCHING
HER!

HE'S SUCH A WEIRDO!







HUFF

UM...
DID I REALLY
NEED TO RUN
AWAY WITH
YOU?

THINGS
WOULD'VE
GOTTEN
ANNOYING IF
I JUST LEFT
YOU BACK
THERE.

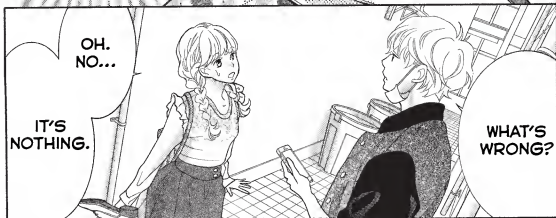
OH,
RIGHT.

BECAUSE
YOUR BUTT
FETISH IS
A SECRET.

IT WOULD
BE BAD
FOR YOU
IF PEOPLE
FOUND OUT
ABOUT IT.

NO.

I KNOW
YOU WON'T
TELL
ANYONE.





UM,
I HAVE
PLANS TO
GO SEE
A MOVIE
RIGHT
NOW.

SO
I'LL BE
GOING.



!



SLAM
A-

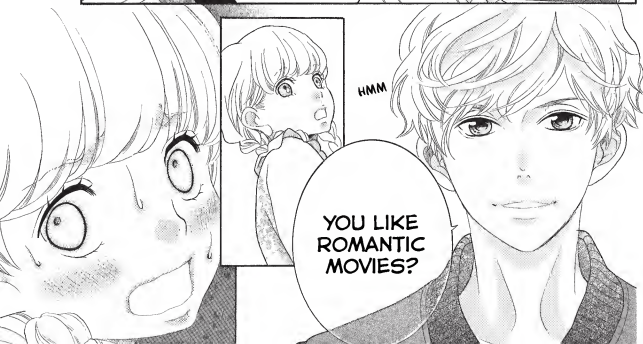
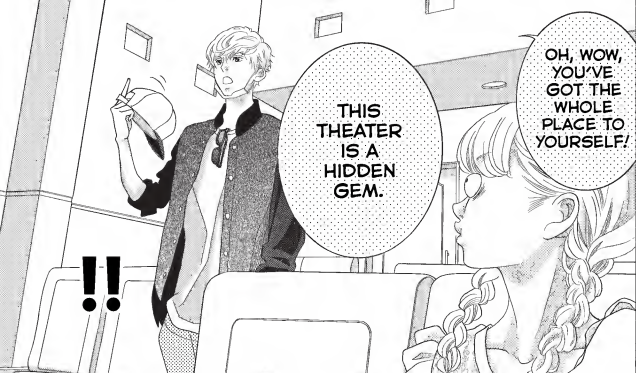
THAT WAS
PROBABLY
WAY MORE
EXCITING
THAN THE
MOVIE WILL
BE.

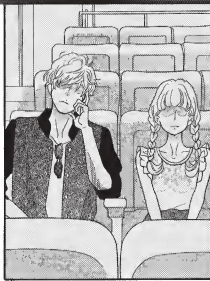
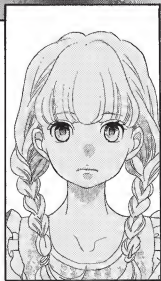
SIGH...

THAT WAS
A PRETTY
INTENSE
EXPERIENCE.

NOW
FOR
THE
FEATURE
FILM...







UGH.

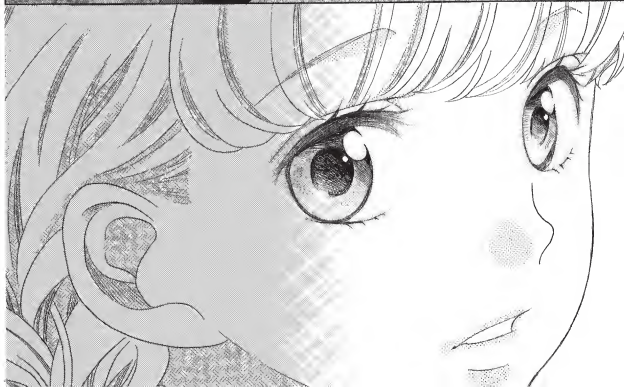
I'LL BE SO
EMBARRASSED
IF HE SEES
ME LIKE
THIS.

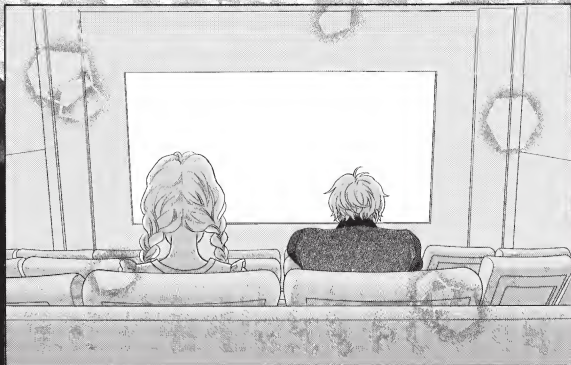
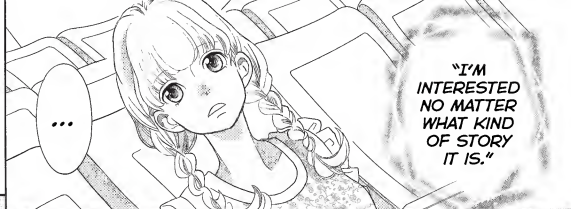
TISSUE...
TISSUE...

HUH?
I'M OUT.

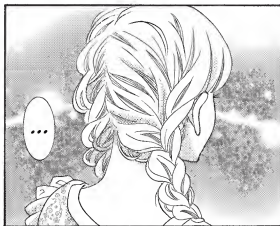
TWINGE
じわ
あ
っ

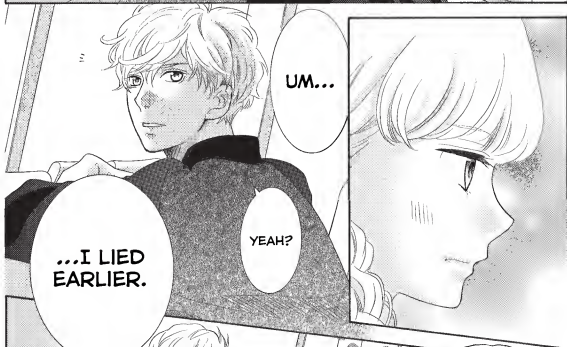
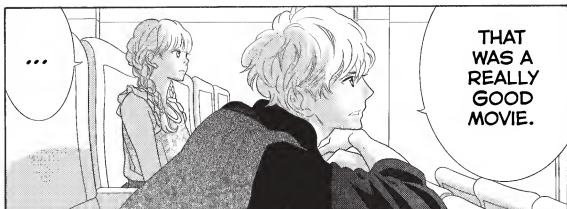






The End





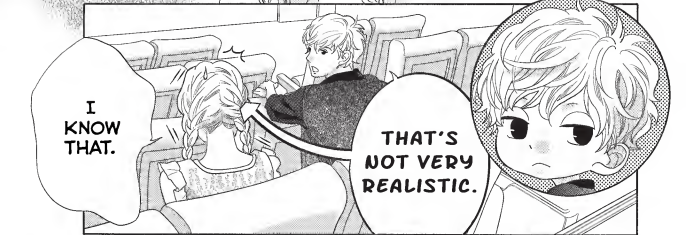


A close-up of a young girl with light-colored hair in two pigtails. She has a soft, hopeful expression and is looking slightly to the right. Her face is partially in shadow.

...AND
HAVE
A FAIRY-
TALE-LIKE
ROMANCE.

I—

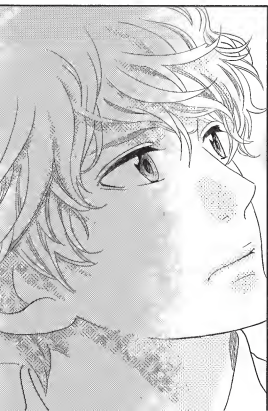
I WANT
TO FALL IN
LOVE WITH A
HANDSOME
BOY...



A classroom scene showing a boy and a girl sitting at their desks. The boy is leaning forward, looking at the girl. The girl is looking back at him. There are other desks and chairs visible in the background.

I
KNOW
THAT.

THAT'S
NOT VERY
REALISTIC.



A close-up of a young boy with light-colored, wavy hair. He has a serious, slightly sad expression and is looking towards the right. His face is partially in shadow.

BUT I FELT
LIKE IT WAS
WRONG TO
LIE TO SUCH
A GENUINE
PERSON.



A boy and a girl sitting at their desks, facing each other. The boy is on the left, looking at the girl. The girl is on the right, looking back at him. They appear to be in a classroom setting.





USE
MINE.

THEY'LL
BE BIG ON
YOU, BUT IT'S
STILL BETTER
THAN WEARING
ONES WITH
A BROKEN
HEEL.

?!



THERE'S
A CAR
WAITING
FOR ME
NEARBY.

BESIDES,
IT'S MY
FAULT THEY
BROKE.

WHAT?!

BUT,
AYASE-SAN,
HOW WILL
YOU...?



OH.

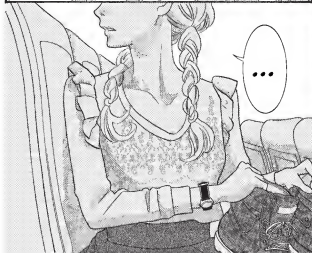
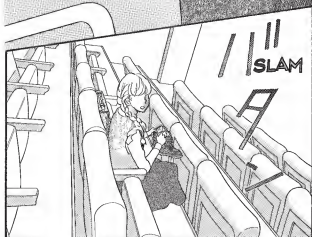


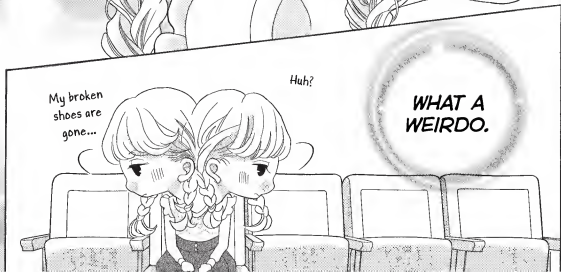
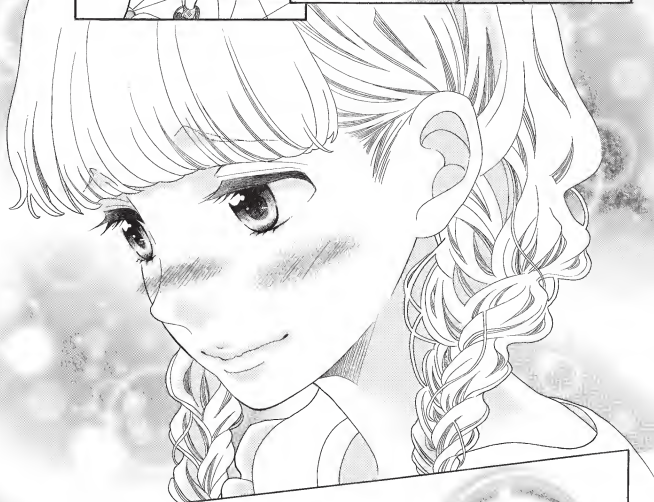
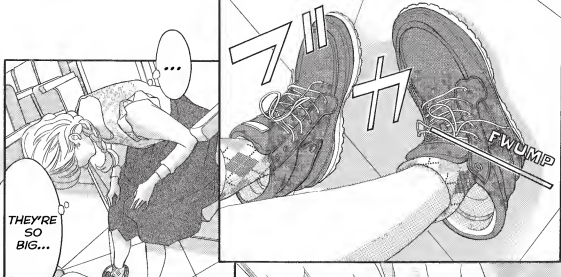
...

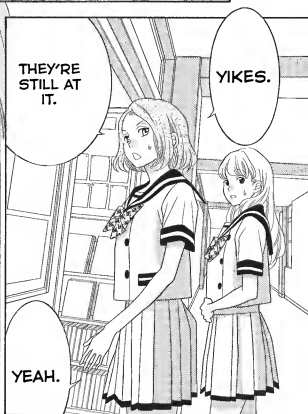
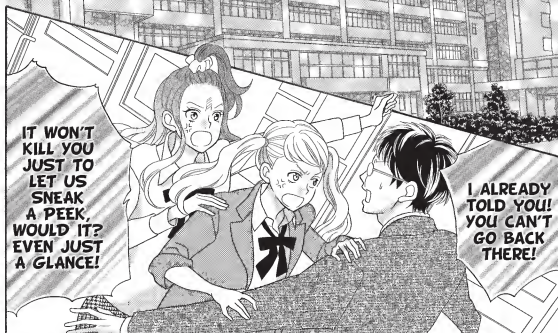
OKAY,
I'M
GOING
BACK.



I BET
YOU OF ALL
PEOPLE WILL FIND
THAT SPECIAL
ROMANCE YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR.







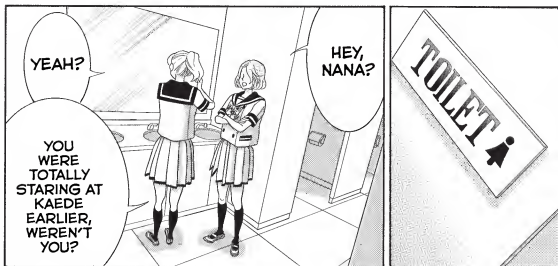
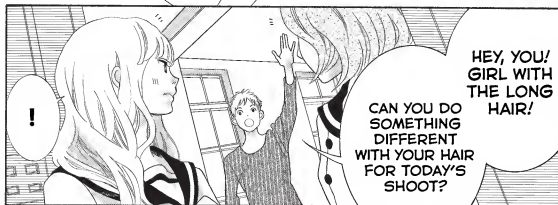


I
BROUGHT
HIS SHOES
WITH ME...

...BUT I
PROBABLY
SHOULDN'T
GIVE THEM
TO HIM
DIRECTLY.

**THA-
THUMP**

Hmm?



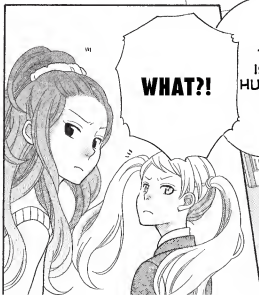
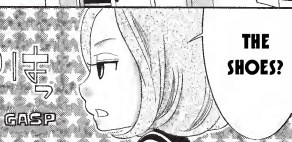


YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG.

YEAH, YOU HAD THIS LOVE-STUCK EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! I WASN'T STARING!

HUH?



WHAT?!

THIS IS SO HUMILIATING!

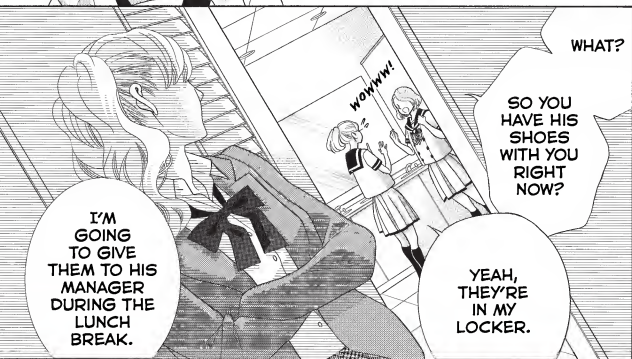


UGH, I AM SO PISSED!

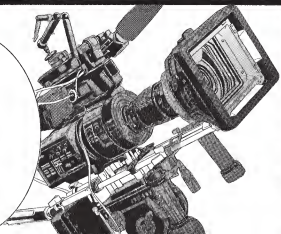
I ALREADY TWEETED THAT I'D BE ABLE TO SEE HIM!

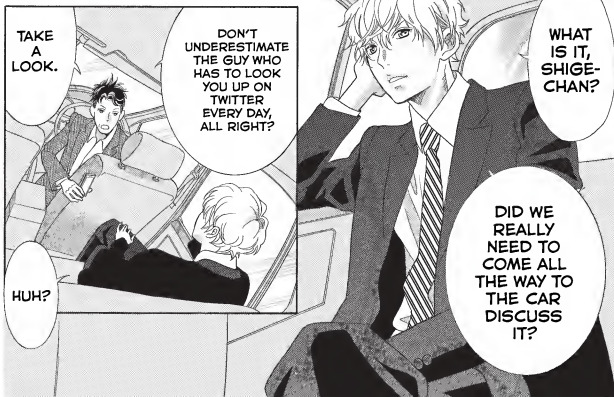
THAT'S
REALLY
ALL IT
WAS.

WE RAN
INTO EACH
OTHER BY
COINCIDENCE,
AND THEN
MY HEEL
BROKE.



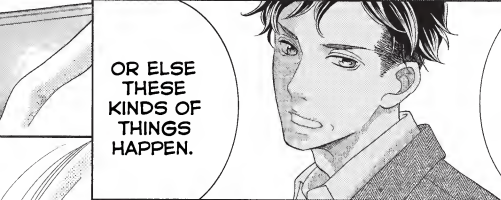
ALL
RIGHT,
LET'S
BREAK
THERE!







DID YOU
MEET UP WITH
A STUDENT
FROM HERE
YESTERDAY?



OR ELSE
THESE
KINDS OF
THINGS
HAPPEN.

THIS
IS WHY
I'M ALWAYS
TELLING YOU
TO BE MORE
SELF-AWARE.



I RESPECT
THE FACT THAT
YOU HAVE YOUR
OWN PRIVATE LIFE,
BUT YOU NEVER
KNOW WHAT KIND
OF CONSEQUENCES
A SINGLE ACTION
MIGHT HAVE.

DON'T
FORGET YOU
HAVE A LOT
OF ENEMIES
SINCE YOU
LEFT YOUR
BAND.



THE
SHOES
ARE
GONE.





I'M THE
ONE WHO
BORROWED
AYASE-SAN'S
SHOES
FROM HIM
YESTERDAY.



CAN
I HELP
YOU?

ARE YOU
AYASE-SAN'S
MANAGER?

SORRY
TO
BOTHER
YOU ALL
OF A
SUDDEN.



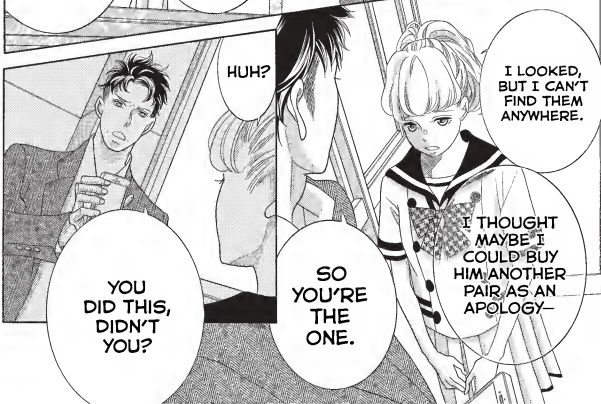
AND,
ACTUALLY,
THEY'VE
SOMEHOW
GONE
MISSING.

...BUT I
BROUGHT
THEM WITH
ME TODAY
TO RETURN
THEM.

...I
WON'T
GO INTO
THE
WHOLE
STORY...

UM...

!



HUH?

I LOOKED,
BUT I CAN'T
FIND THEM
ANYWHERE.

YOU
DID THIS,
DIDN'T
YOU?

SO
YOU'RE
THE
ONE.

I THOUGHT
MAYBE I
COULD BUY
HIM ANOTHER
PAIR AS AN
APOLOGY—



KAEDELOVE ♥ JK@ ☆×☆☆

KAEDE GAVE ME HIS SHOES YESTERDAY!
PRETTY COOL, HUH? ♥ ♥
HE'S FILMING AT MY SCHOOL RIGHT NOW ♪
I THINK IT MIGHT BE LOVE! — (*o ▽ o*)

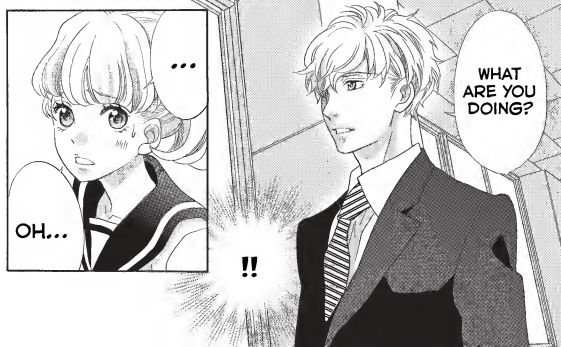


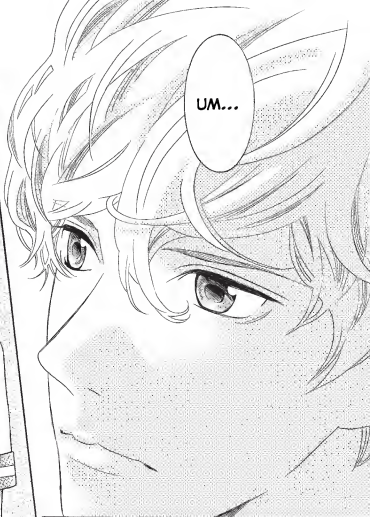
KAEDE GAVE ME HIS
SHOES YESTERDAY!

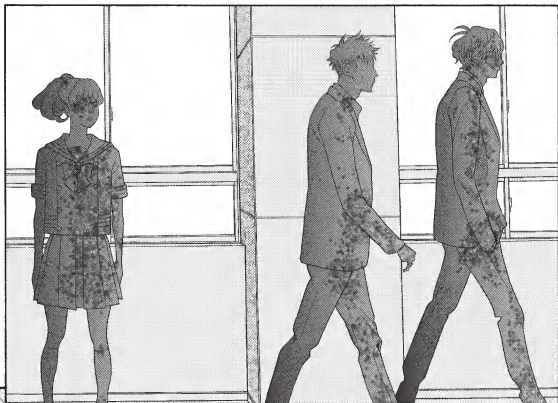
WHAT?

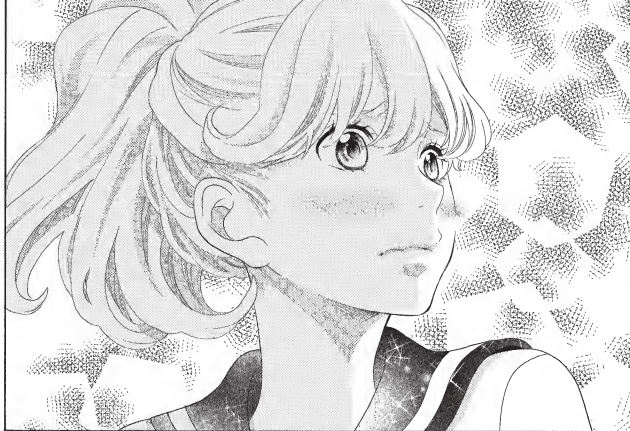




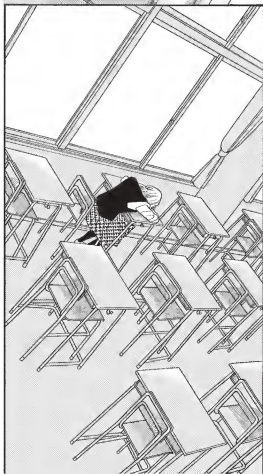








**SO THIS IS IT?
WE'RE PARTING WAYS
BECAUSE OF SOME
MISUNDERSTANDING?**



"HE'S NOT
JUST A
PRETTY
FACE.
HE HAS
A HEART,
TOO."



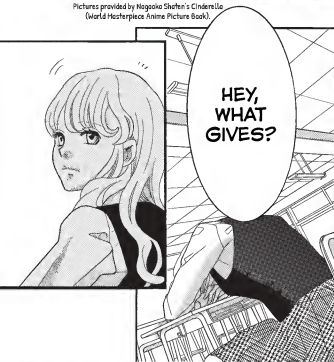
WAS
KAEDE'S
APPEARANCE
THE ONLY
THING I
WAS PAYING
ATTENTION
TO?

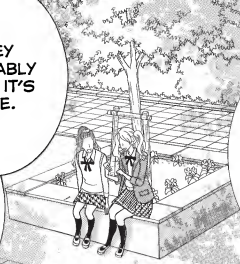


I
COULDN'T
EVEN
SAY
ANYTHING
BACK.

Pictures provided by Nagasaki Shoten's Cinderella
(World Masterpiece Anime Picture Book).

HEY,
WHAT
GIVES?

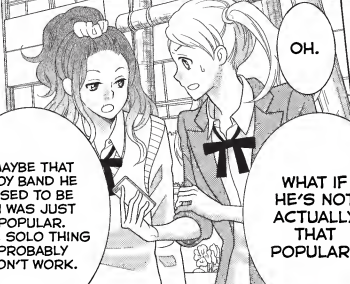




THEY
PROBABLY
THINK IT'S
FAKE.

NO.
IF THEY'RE
FANS, THEY
SHOULD
KNOW THOSE
ARE HIS
SHOES.

PEOPLE
AREN'T
RETWEETING
THAT POST
ABOUT
KAEDE'S
SHOES.



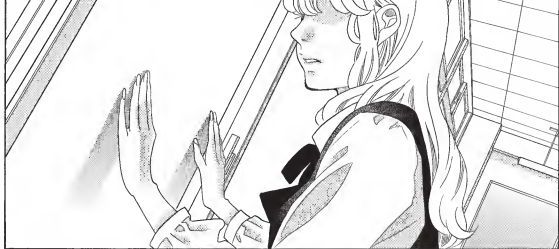
OH.

MAYBE THAT
BOY BAND HE
USED TO BE
IN WAS JUST
POPULAR.
THE SOLO THING
PROBABLY
WON'T WORK.

WHAT IF
HE'S NOT
ACTUALLY
THAT
POPULAR?



THEN I
DON'T WANT
TO BE HIS
FAN ANYMORE,
EITHER.
IT'S KIND OF
PATHETIC.



...JUST
LIKE
THEM?

AM
I...

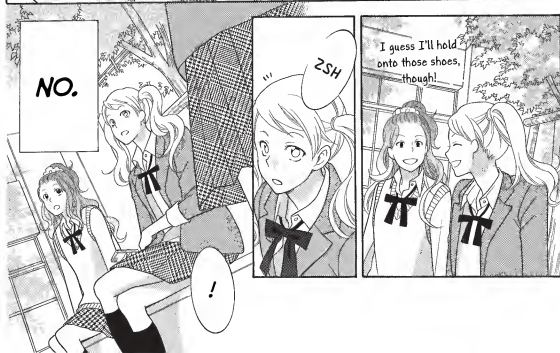


BECAUSE
HE'S GOT
A PRETTY
FACE?

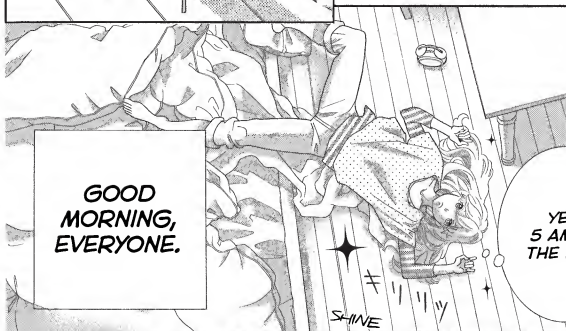
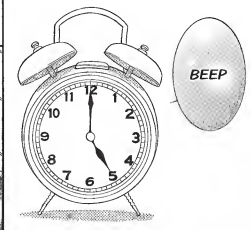
BECAUSE
HE'S
FAMOUS?

IS THAT WHY
IT WAS FUN
BEING WITH
HIM?

GRRK

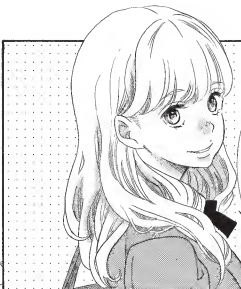




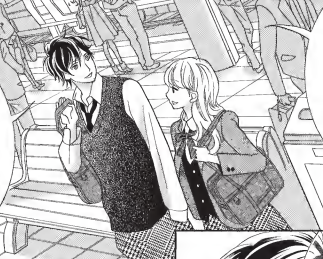


**I'M LIVING
MY LIFE
ON A SET
SCHEDULE
THAT NEVER
CHANGES.**





AH-CHAN,
WHAT DID
YOU DO
OVER THE
BREAK?



PLAYED
WITH MY
BAND,
OBSOLETE.

WE
ALL GOT
TOGETHER
AND
PRACTICED
SOME SONGS.

THAT'S
GREAT!



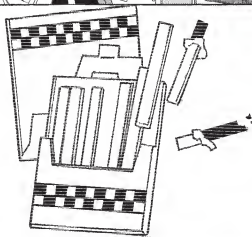
OH.

YEAH.



HOW WAS
IT BEING
AN EXTRA,
HINANA?

WAS
KAEDE
JUST AS
COOL
AS YOU
EXPECTED?



**I'LL JUST
PRETEND
THAT WAS ALL
A DREAM.**



I CAN!

OKAY,
WHO CAN
SOLVE THIS
PROBLEM?

IT'S

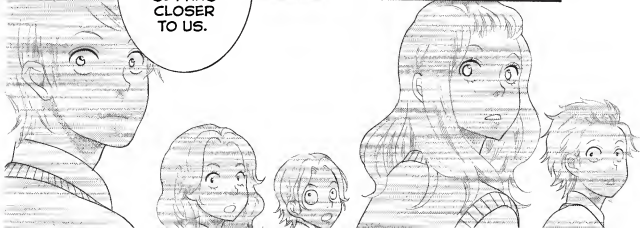
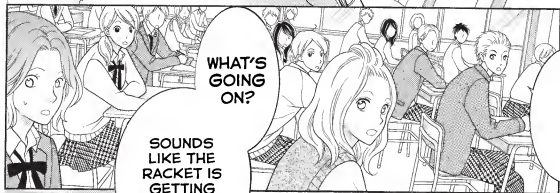
$$x = \frac{\pm 3\sqrt{7}i}{4} !!$$

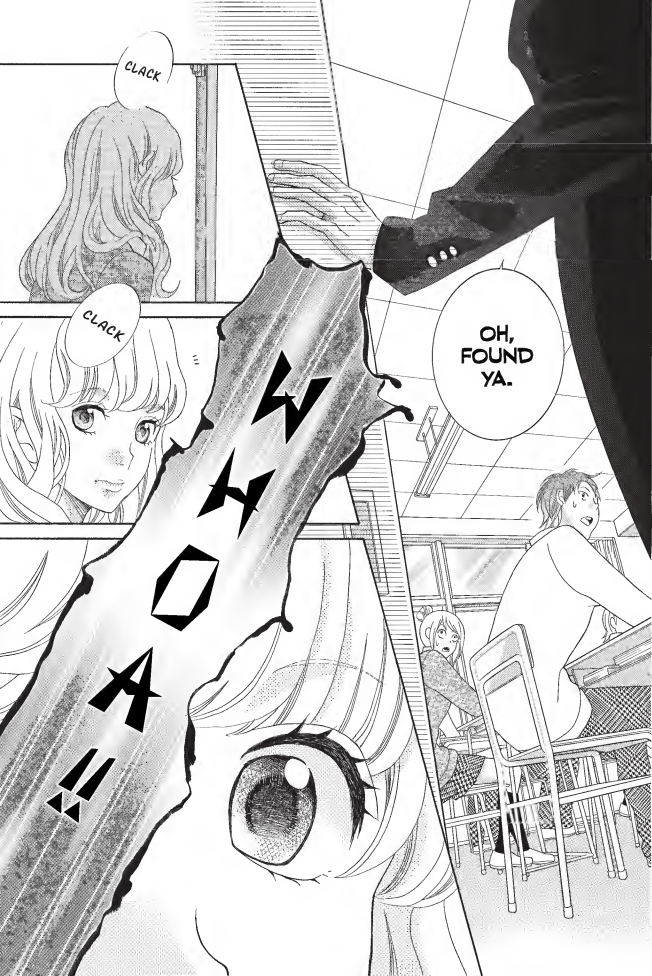
CLATTER

WHOA,
JUST WHAT
YOU'D
EXPECT
FROM A
STUDENT
COUNCIL
MEMBER.

CORRECT.

NO,
I JUST
REVIEWED
IT EARLIER.
THAT'S
ALL.

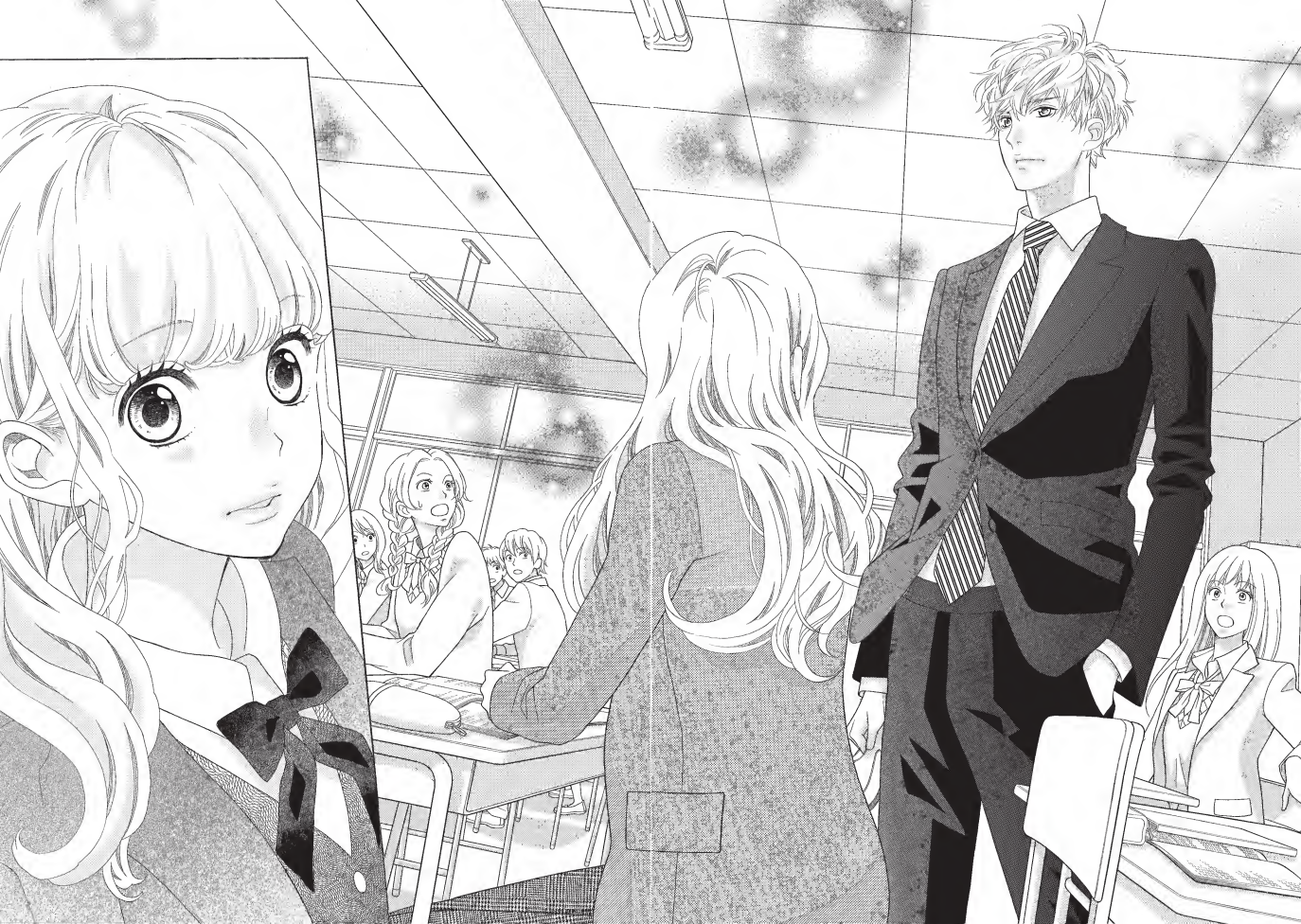




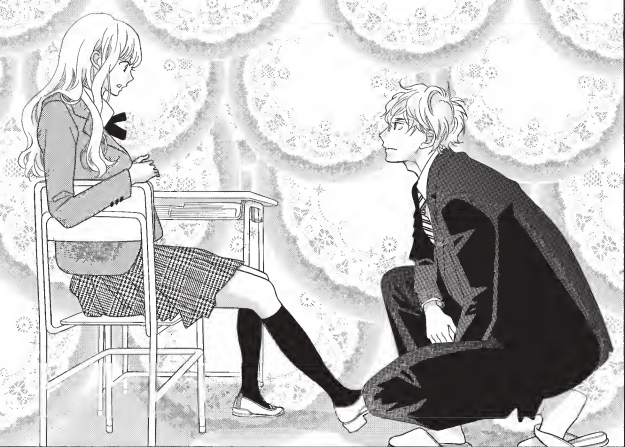
CLACK

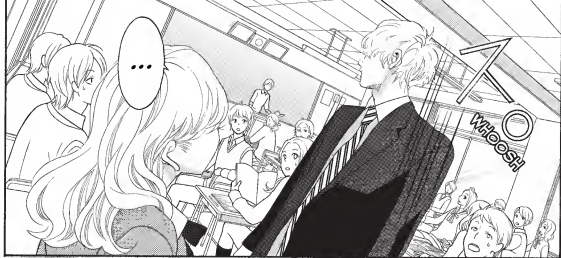
CLACK

OH,
FOUND
YA.



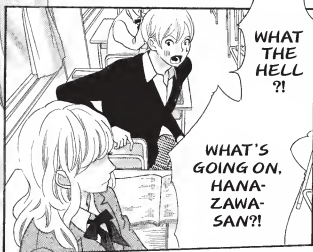
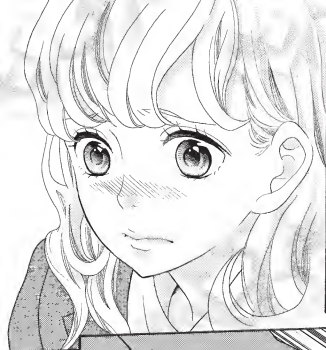






I JUST
CAME TO DROP
SOMETHING OFF.
PLEASE DON'T
MAKE A BIG DEAL
OUT OF IT,
OKAY?







**I GOT
YOUR
SHOES
BACK!**

**I WASN'T
THE ONE WHO
POSTED THAT
PICTURE!**



I KNOW.





I SAID
THAT YOU
WOULDN'T
TELL ANYONE,
REMEMBER?

SHIGE-
CHAN GIVES
SUCH LONG
LECTURES,
SO IT'S BEST
TO JUST
WALK AWAY.



HUH?



WHAT
NOW?

?

I WAS JUST
THINKING
ABOUT HOW
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW YOUR
NAME.

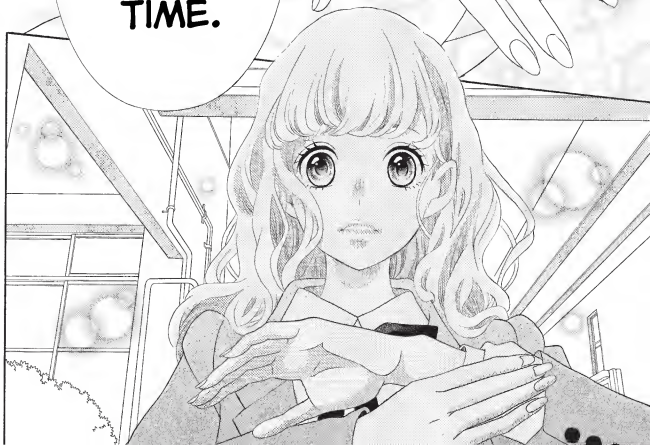


GIVE
ME
YOUR
HAND.

OH,
RIGHT.

A large, pale hand is shown from the wrist down, with fingers spread. A black marker is being used to write the number '080-3191' on the back of the hand. The background is a dark, textured surface with some light spots.

**TELL
ME YOUR
NAME
NEXT
TIME.**



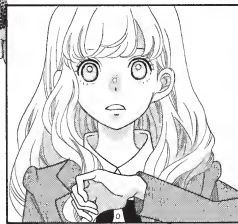
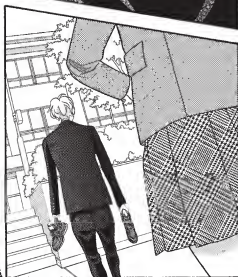


SEE YA,
PANTIES-
CHAN.



HE...

...IS
SOMEONE
WHO LIVES
IN A WORLD
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
WORLD FROM
MINE.





NO
WAY.

OR AT LEAST,
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

GREETINGS ②

EVERY MONTH, THE MAGAZINE THIS STORY IS IN PUTS THE TAG LINE "A REAL CINDERELLA STORY" ON THIS MANGA. IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S A FUN, FANTASY-LIKE STORY THAT CAME FROM ME WANTING TO SHARE MY EXPERIENCES.

IN ANY CASE, THE REASON I DECIDED TO WRITE A STORY WITH AN ACTOR IN IT IS BECAUSE MY PREVIOUS WORK, *LOVE'S REACH* (KINKYORI RENAI), WAS MADE INTO A MOVIE. MEETING ALL OF THE PROFESSIONALS (THE ACTORS, THE DIRECTOR, THE STAFF, THE SCREENWRITER, THE PRODUCERS) WHO WERE ABLE TO CONVEY THAT FANTASY STORY, TO THE FANS AND TO THE AUDIENCE, REALLY INSPIRED ME.

I THINK IT'S REALLY COOL HOW THEY ALL WORKED TOGETHER TO TRANSPORT THE AUDIENCE INTO A FICTIONAL WORLD.

THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO MAKE A STORY FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE ALSO FANS OF SOMEONE FAMOUS. ALL I WANT IS FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO DREAM ABOUT THINGS LIKE, "MAYBE I COULD MEET MY CELEBRITY CRUSH! AND THEN I COULD TALK TO THEM! AND WHAT IF THINGS JUST KEPT PROGRESSING FROM THERE?!"

BESIDES, WHILE CELEBRITIES ARE EXTRAORDINARY, THEY'RE STILL JUST PEOPLE. THEY GO TO THE BATHROOM JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, AND THEY SPACE OUT AND DAYDREAM JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. WE'RE REALLY ALL THE SAME, Y'KNOW?

I WANTED TO CAPTURE THINGS LIKE THAT IN MY STORY, TOO.

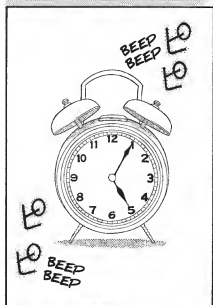
OH, BUT OF COURSE, THEY'RE STILL CELEBRITIES, SO THEY HAVE A SPARKLING AURA THAT'S ON ANOTHER LEVEL! (THESE ARE ALL JUST MY OWN PERSONAL THOUGHTS.)

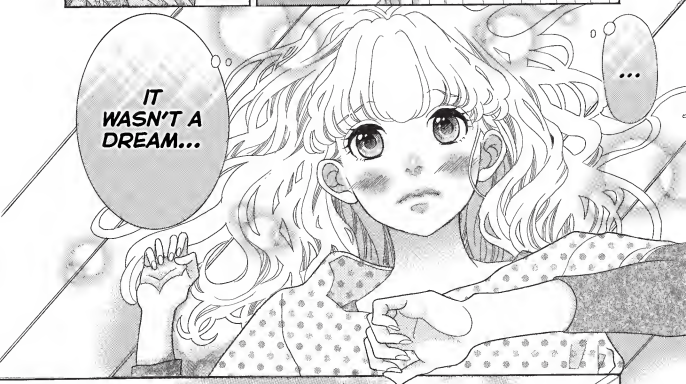
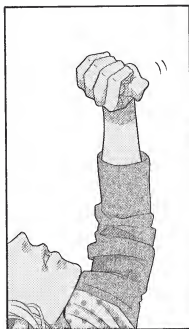
BASICALLY, WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS THAT I'M REALLY GRATEFUL THAT I GOT TO MEET EVERYONE WHO WORKED ON THE *LOVE'S REACH* MOVIE.



STORY. 2

So Pleased to Make Your Acquaintance





**THE KAEDE
APPEARED
IN CLASS
YESTERDAY.**

10 SIGH

**I
STILL
CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT.**

**BUT
DIDN'T
THAT PUT
YOU IN THE
SPOTLIGHT,
HINANA?**

Were you okay?

**HE
CAME ALL
THE WAY
HERE JUST
TO RETURN
NANA'S
SHOES—
HOW NICE
IS THAT?!**

**HE'S
RIDICULOUSLY
HOT AND
A GENTLEMAN.
AND BOLD?
I FRIGGIN'
LOVE HIM.**

**I WISH I
COULD BE AN
EXTRA AGAIN
OR SOMETHING,
JUST SO I
COULD BE
NEAR HIM!**

**I WONDER
IF WE'LL
EVER SEE
HIM AGAIN.**

...

**YEAH.
THEY'VE
BEEN
HAMMERING
ME WITH
QUESTIONS,
BUT IT'S
REALLY NO
BIG DEAL.**

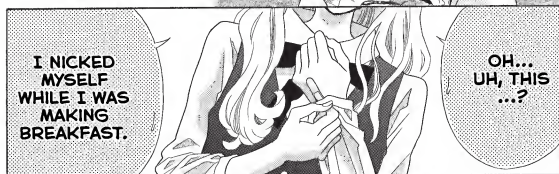
**MY SHOE
BROKE WHEN
WE RAN INTO
EACH OTHER,
SO HE HAD
IT FIXED AND
BROUGHT IT
TO ME.
THAT'S ALL.**



NANA,
WHAT'S
WITH THAT
BAND-AID
ON YOUR
HAND?

HUH?

OH!
WHAT
HAPPENED
?



I NICKED
MYSELF
WHILE I WAS
MAKING
BREAKFAST.

OH...
UH, THIS
...?



BECAUSE
I STILL
CAN'T EVEN
BELIEVE IT
MYSELF.

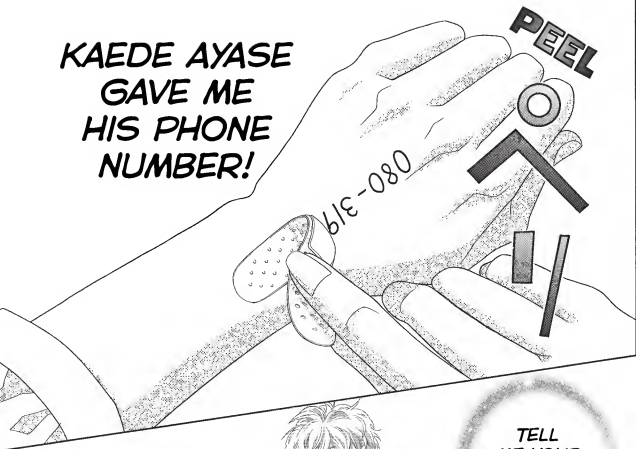


OHH.

I LIED.

TOILET ♀

**KAEDE AYASE
GAVE ME
HIS PHONE
NUMBER!**



**TELL
ME YOUR
NAME
NEXT
TIME.**



**I
WORKED
AS AN
EXTRA.**

**...BUT
STILL!**

**AND I
SPENT
A FEW
HOURS
WITH HIM
ON MY DAY
OFF.**



**THERE'S
NO WAY
I CAN DO
SOMETHING
SO OUTRA-
GEOUS.**

**I
THINK
THAT
MEANS
I'M
SUPPOSED
TO CALL
HIM,
BUT...**

*Make
my hair
dance!*

umo

JUST SPRAY,
NO FLYAWAYS!

umo

umo

umo

umo

umo

**WE'RE
TALKING
ABOUT A
SUPERSTAR
HERE!**

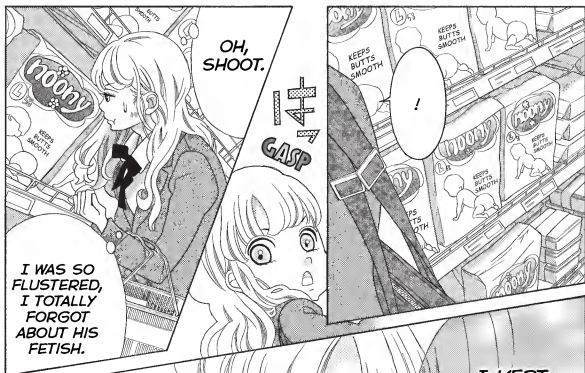


**THE ONLY
IMPRESSIVE
THING ABOUT
ME IS MY
SCHEDULE-
ORIENTED
LIFE.**

**ME,
ON THE
OTHER HAND,
I'M JUST AN
ORDINARY
GIRL.**

**HE'S
EVERYWHERE
I GO.**

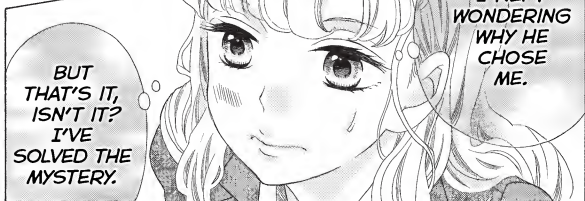
...



OH, SHOOT.

GASP

I WAS SO FLUSTERED, I TOTALLY FORGOT ABOUT HIS FETISH.



BUT THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT? I'VE SOLVED THE MYSTERY.

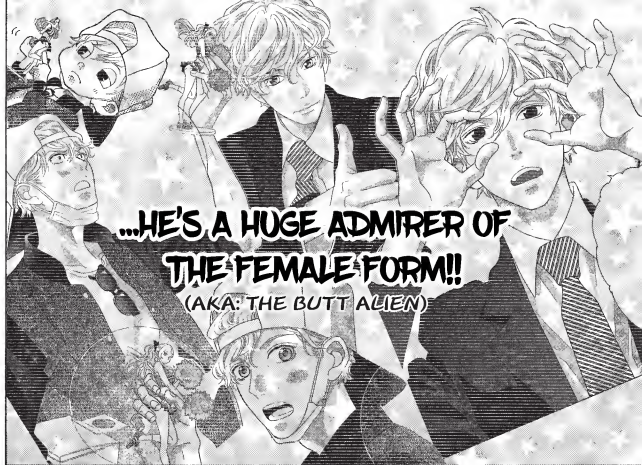
I KEPT WONDERING WHY HE CHOSE ME.



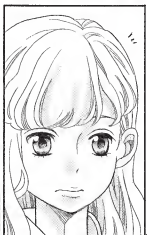
BECAUSE...

KEEPS BUTTS SMOOTH

FOR AYASE-SAN, ASKING FOR SOMEONE'S NUMBER IS PROBABLY AN EVERYDAY OCCURRENCE.



**...HE'S A HUGE ADMIRER OF
THE FEMALE FORM!!**
(AKA: THE BUTT ALIEN)



SO,
YEAH,
I BET
THAT WAS
ALL JUST
SWEET
TALK.

I'VE
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT
FROM ALL
ANGLES,
AND THERE'S
NO OTHER
EXPLANATION.



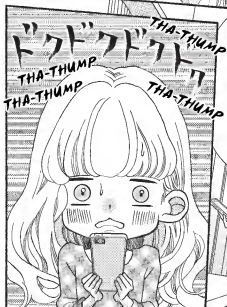
THAT
WOULD
BE SO
PAINFUL.

WHAT
IF I CALL
HIM AND
HE'S LIKE,
"WHO'S THIS"
?

BECAUSE
THAT
DAY IS
A REALLY
PRECIOUS
MEMORY
FOR ME.



EVEN SO,
I CAN'T
STOP
THINKING
ABOUT IT.



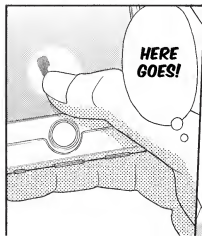
JUST
ONCE!
JUST
ONCE!

BIP ヒョ

BIP
ヒョ

ヒョ
BIP

RIIP
RIIP
RIIP



HERE
GOES!

IF HE
DOESN'T
ANSWER,
I'LL LEAVE
A MESSAGE,
AND THEN
THAT'S THE
END OF IT!



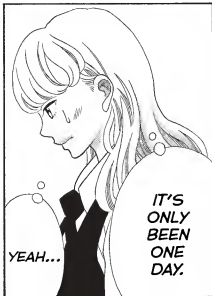


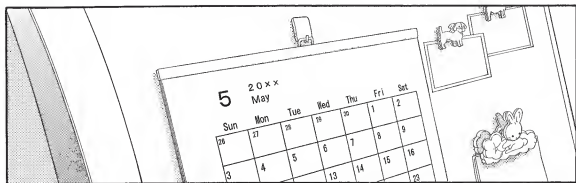
...DO YOU
REMEMBER
ME?





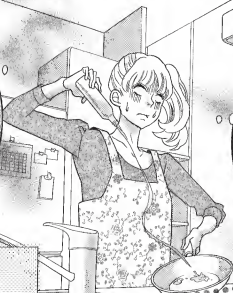
**BUT
WHAT
IF HE'S
IGNORING
ME?**





JUST GO
ABOUT YOUR
EVERYDAY
LIFE LIKE
ALWAYS AND
WAIT!

LIKE DOING
HOUSEWORK



JUST
STOP IT.
DON'T DRIVE
YOURSELF
CRAZY
THINKING
ABOUT
IT.

LIKE IMMERSED
MYSELF IN
MY STUDIES

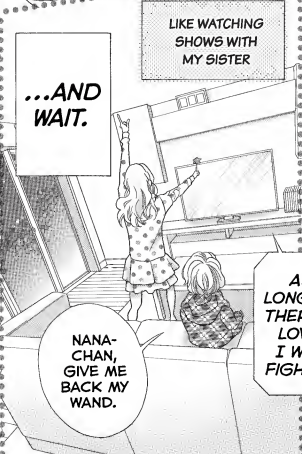
...AND
WAIT.

LIKE WATCHING
SHOWS WITH
MY SISTER

...AND
WAIT.

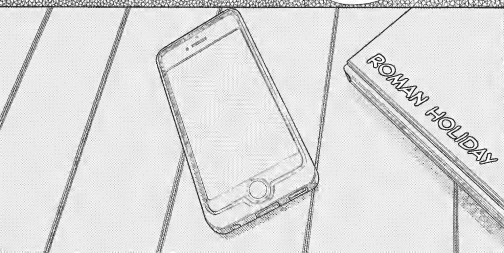
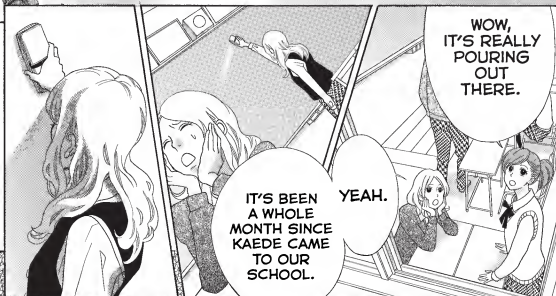
NANA-
CHAN,
GIVE ME
BACK MY
WAND.

AS
LONG AS
THERE'S
LOVE,
I WILL
FIGHT!★





F
H
S
A
H
A
H





2-2

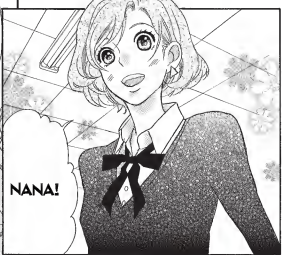
HE'S
PROBABLY
NOT GOING
TO REPLY.



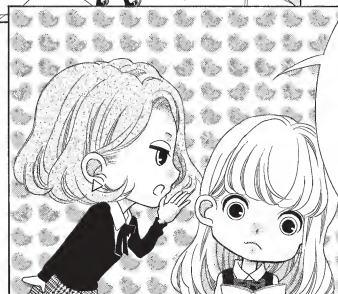
HEHE,
I'VE GOT
SOME BIG
NEWS FOR
YOU.

RUN-CHAN.

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



NANA!



I GOT GUESS
WHAT!
TICKETS
TO SEE THE
TAPING OF A
VARIETY SHOW
THAT KAEDE IS
GOING TO
BE ON.



DO
YOU
WANT TO
COME,
TOO,
NANA?

AFTER
WE WERE
EXTRAS,
I FOUND A
POST LOOKING
FOR AUDIENCE
MEMBERS AND
APPLIED.

IT'S AT
4 PM THE
DAY AFTER
TOMORROW,
SO WE CAN
GO AFTER
SCHOOL.



?!
"

HUH?

WHY
NOT?!



That was
quick!

BAM
すはっ



I CAN'T GO.

HE MIGHT
NOTICE US IF
YOU'RE THERE...
AND RECOGNIZE
YOU AS THE GIRL
WHO PLAYED
THE EXTRA.
♡

PLEASE,
NANA,
GO WITH
ME?



BECAUSE...

...AYASE-SAN
PROBABLY
REGRETS...

...GIVING
ME HIS
NUMBER,
BECAUSE IT'S
BECOME A
BURDEN.



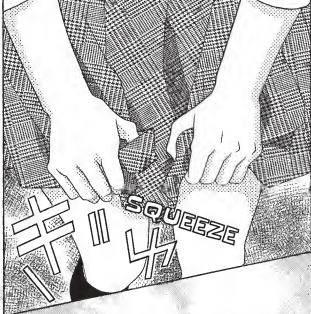
"I BET
YOU OF ALL
PEOPLE WILL
FIND THAT
SPECIAL
ROMANCE
YOU'RE
LOOKING
FOR."



YES!

**ALL
RIGHT.**

**I'M
SUCH A
FOOL.**



**...IS
WHAT I TELL
MYSELF,
UNABLE
TO LET GO
OF THAT
GLIMMER OF
HOPE.**

**THERE
MUST BE
A GOOD
REASON HE
COULDN'T
RESPOND...**

**TODAY YOU
HAVE TWO
TAPINGS:
OSHARE IZUMI
AND SEKAI
GYOUTEN
SCOOP.**

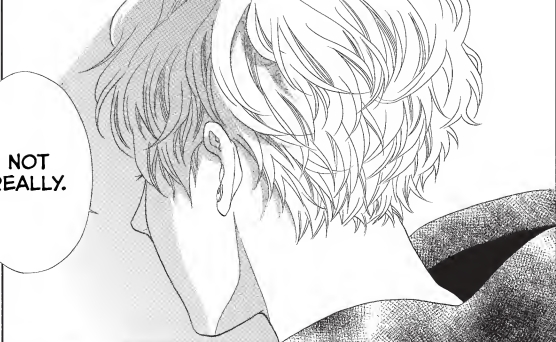
**ONE OF
THEM HAS A
LIVE STUDIO
AUDIENCE.**

**AND
THEN YOU
HAVE TWO
INTERVIEWS
TONIGHT.**

DRESSING ROOM

**KADE
AYASE-SAMA**





NOT
REALLY.



I CAME TO
INTRODUCE
MYSELF.

EXCUSE
ME.



KNOCK
KNOCK



NICE
TO MEET
YOU.



SHE'LL BE
APPEARING
ON THE
SECOND
SHOW
WITH
YOU.

THIS
GIRL IS A
GRAVURE
IDOL AND
IS A RISING
STAR.

OH,
THANK
YOU FOR
YOUR
TIME.





**YOU'RE
ABSOLUTE
SCUM!**

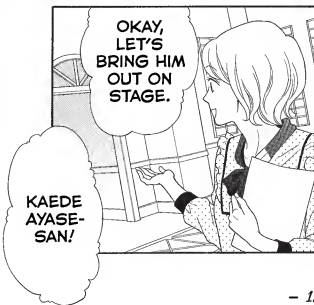
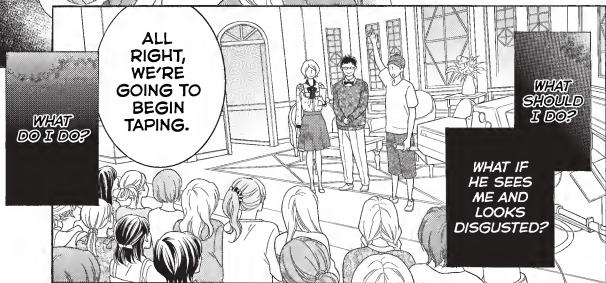
THAT
BUTT WAS
RIDICULOUS,
SHIGE-CHAN.

WILLIAMS
HEH NICE.

I BET THE CHANCES OF HIM SEEING US IS SUPER HIGH!

WE'RE
SO CLOSE
TO THE
STAGE!

WHOA!



YOU
FLATTER
ME.

I'M
SHOCKED
AT HOW
LONG
YOUR
LEGS
ARE!

ヒ"JOLT
ヰ"
ヰ"

Well,

YOU'RE
JUST AS
GORGEOUS
AS EVER,
KAEDE-KUN.

WHAT DO
YOU DO ON
YOUR DAYS
OFF?

I'LL
JUST JUMP
STRAIGHT
INTO IT.
TELL US
ABOUT YOUR
EVERYDAY
LIFE.♪

I LIKE
TO PLAY
GAMES
AND READ
BOOKS.

LET'S SEE.
I DON'T
REALLY LEAVE
MY HOUSE
MUCH.

THANKS
FOR
HAVING
ME.

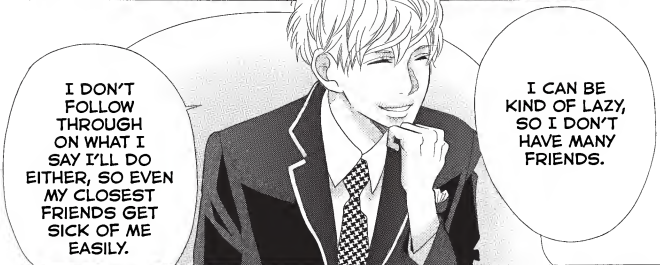
KYAAAAA



WELL I
THOUGHT
YOU'D BE
THE TYPE
WITH LOTS
OF FRIENDS,
PARTYING AT
CLUBS AND
STUFF.

I LIKE
BEING
INDOORS.

REALLY?
SINCE YOU
DANCE, I
ASSUMED YOU
WERE A SUPER
ACTIVE GUY.



I DON'T
FOLLOW
THROUGH
ON WHAT I
SAY I'LL DO
EITHER, SO EVEN
MY CLOSEST
FRIENDS GET
SICK OF ME
EASILY.

I CAN BE
KIND OF LAZY,
SO I DON'T
HAVE MANY
FRIENDS.



DOES
...

...THAT
PART...

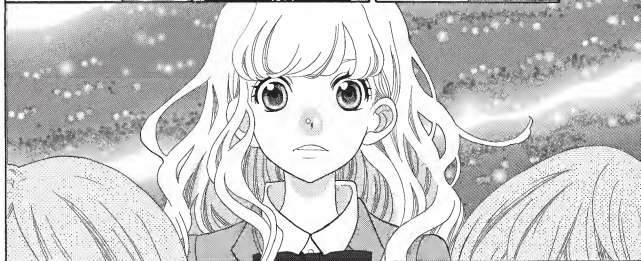
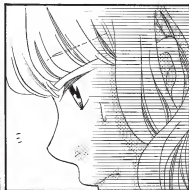
...ABOUT
NOT
FOLLOWING
THROUGH...
ALSO APPLY
TO THE
PHONE
CALL?



!



WHAAAT?
NOW I
FEEL LIKE
I SHOULD
BE YOUR
FRIEND.



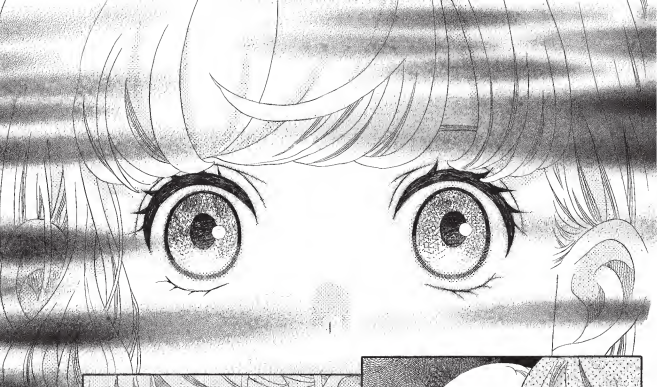
...MET.

1X
HMPH

OF
COURSE.

AH.

OUR
EYES...



SEE?



**SO I
DID GET
HURT.
THE END.**

HE
DIDN'T
LOOK AT
ME, BUT
I'M STILL
TOTALLY
SATISFIED!♪

WOW,
THAT
WAS SO
GREAT!



WHAT?
I DON'T
MIND
WAITING.

BUT THE
LINE WILL
GO FASTER
IF IT'S
JUST ME.

Hey,
RUN-CHAN,
YOU CAN GO
AHEAD TO
THE GIFT
SHOP.

YOU DON'T
REALLY NEED
TO USE THE
RESTROOM,
RIGHT?

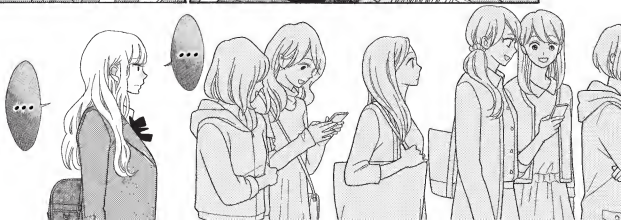


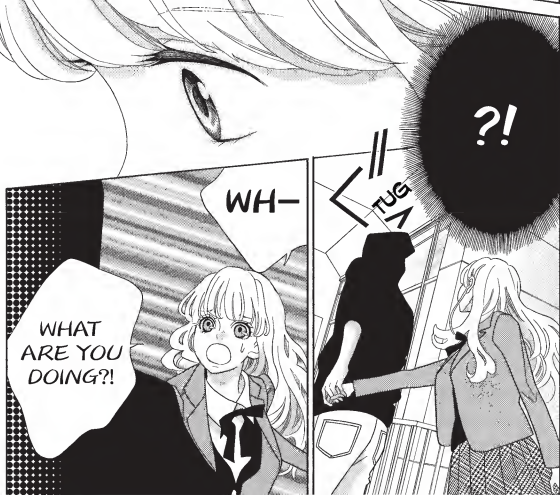
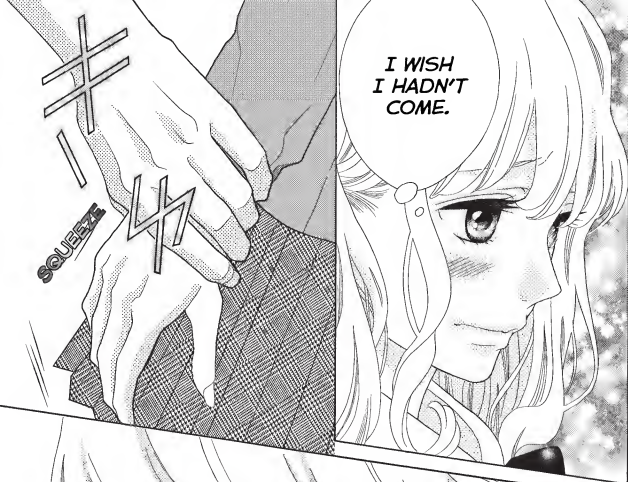
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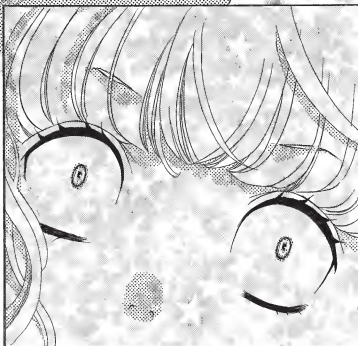


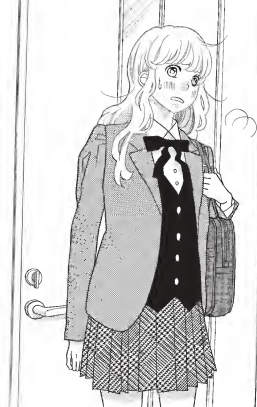
OKAY.

OKAY, I'LL
GO AHEAD.
I'LL PICK OUT
A SOUVENIR
FOR AKIRA.



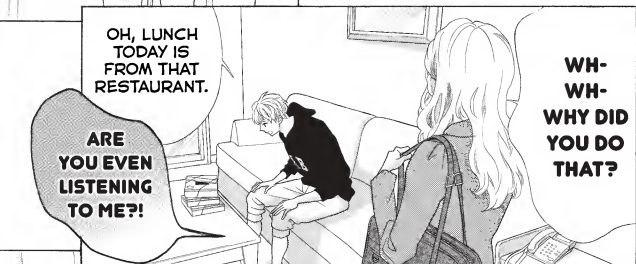






I'm glad
no one
noticed
me.

GOING
DOWNSTAIRS
WAS PRETTY
THRILLING.



OH, LUNCH
TODAY IS
FROM THAT
RESTAURANT.

ARE
YOU EVEN
LISTENING
TO ME?!

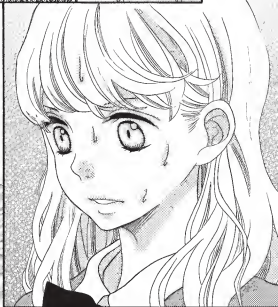
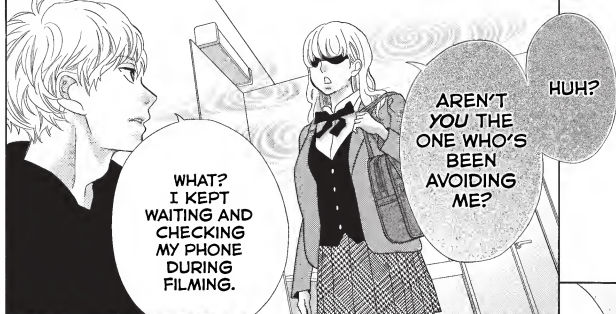
WH-
WH-
WHY DID
YOU DO
THAT?



I THOUGHT
YOU WERE
IGNORING
ME, BUT
THEN, HERE
YOU ARE.

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN,
"WHY?" I'VE
BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU TO
CALL ME.

GAR





UM.



...



• I MEANT
TO GIVE YOU
MY PRIVATE
NUMBER...

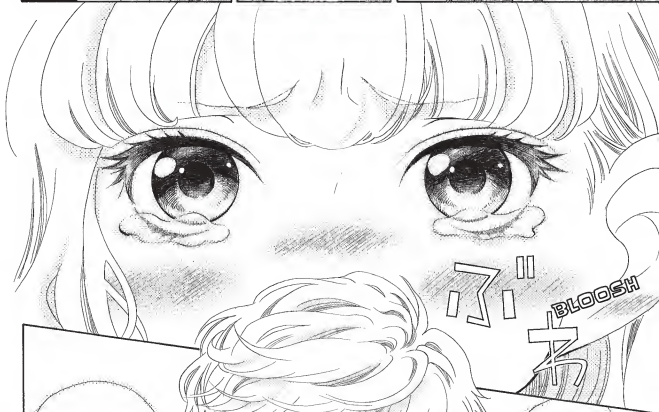
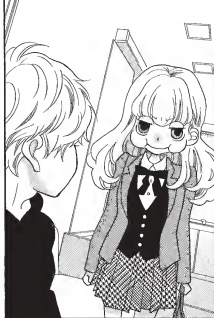


**DUCK
LIPS.**

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?

I HEARD
YOU CAN GET
AWAY WITH
ANYTHING IF
YOU DO THIS.

...BUT
BY HABIT, I
ALWAYS GIVE
THE OTHER ONE
TO PEOPLE I
MEET FOR THE
FIRST TIME...



...DON'T
DO THIS
ANYMORE...

PLEASE...



I
KNEW
THAT
ALREADY,
THOUGH.

I WAS
THINKING
ABOUT IT SO
SERIOUSLY.

I
WAS THE
ONLY ONE
GETTING
MY HOPES
UP...

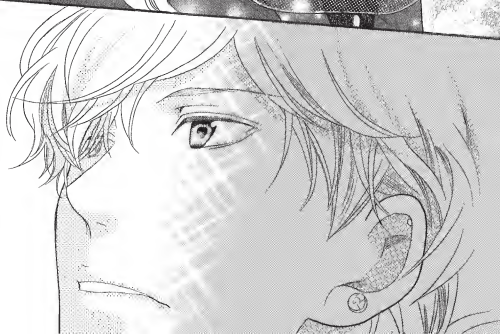
...AND
THEN
BEING LET
DOWN.

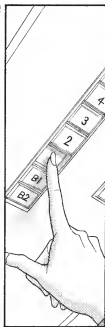
BUT
THIS WAS ALL
JUST ON A WHIM
FOR YOU,
WASN'T IT,
AYASE-SAN?



I
FEEL
LIKE
SUCH A
FOOL.

AND
DESPITE ALL
THAT, I **STILL**
WANTED YOU
TO LEARN MY
NAME.







I'M
OFF THIS
SATURDAY.
WANT TO
MEET
UP?

OH,
RIGHT.

ト
ノ
PAT

7 11 WHR

I
WANT TO
SEE YOU
AGAIN.

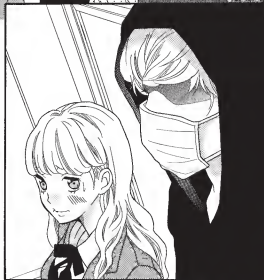
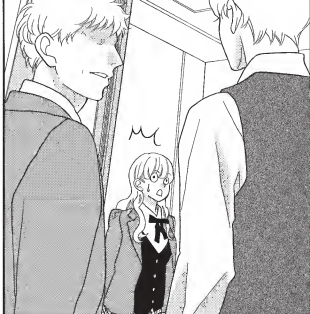
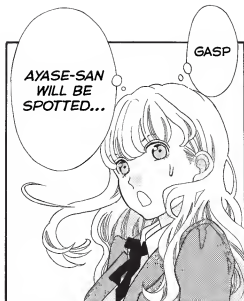
HUH?

THIS
IS WHY I
TOLD YOU
NOT TO
LEAD ME
ON!

I DON'T
WANT
TO KEEP
EXPECTING
SOMETHING
FROM YOU!!

7 11 DING

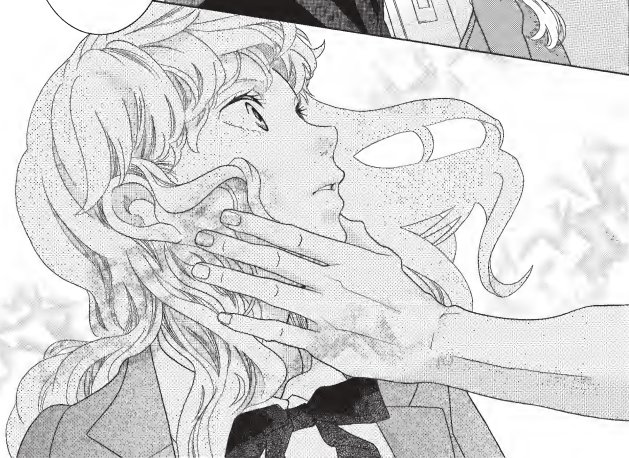
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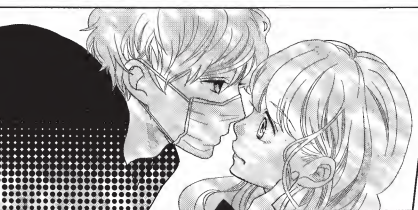


MUTTER



?





DING





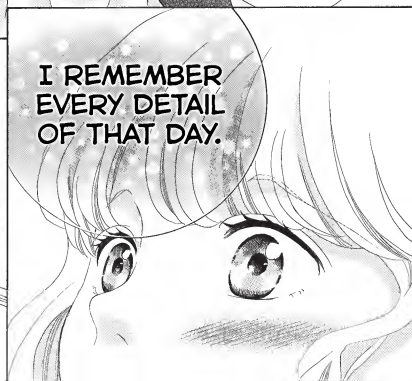
WHEN I
WON THAT
FIGURINE,
YOU
LAUGHED,
REMEMBER?

**BWHAAT
?!**

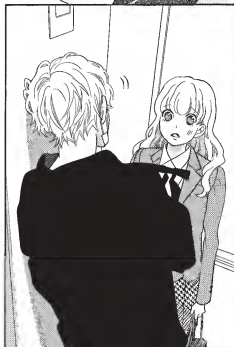


AND IT'S
REFRESHING
HOW
EVERYTHING
YOU DO AND
SAY IS SO
SERIOUS.

I REALLY
LIKED HOW
YOU CAUGHT
ME OFF-
GUARD.



I REMEMBER
EVERY DETAIL
OF THAT DAY.



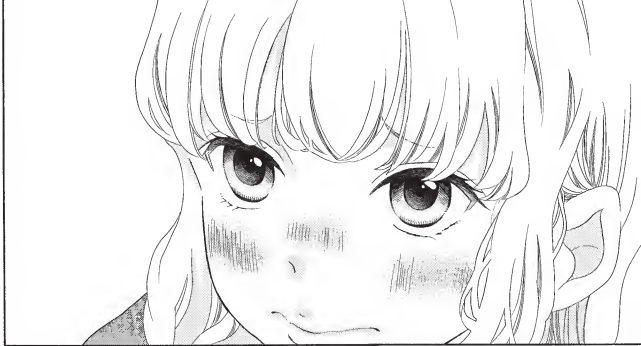


I'VE BEEN
WAITING FOR
SO LONG,
JUST TO
LEARN YOUR
NAME.



IS
THIS
REALLY
OKAY?

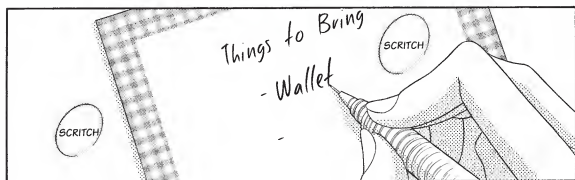






STORY. 3

Even Though You're Mine



Kiss Me ☆☆
at the Stroke of ☆☆
Midnight



AND
MAYBE
GUM?

Aw, it's
over
already!

TUNE
IN AGAIN
NEXT
WEEK!

HANDKER-
CHIEF.

TISSUES.

LIP BALM.

THA-THUMP



THA-THUMP

THA-THUMP



THA-THUMP

I WONDER
IF IT'S WEIRD
TO PLAN FOR
THIS LIKE
IT'S A FIELD
TRIP...



...



JUST ONE
SWIPE FOR
A MAGICAL
LUSTRE—



IN ANY
CASE, I'M
GLAD MOM
WILL BE
OFF WORK
TOMORROW.

SHE
CAN
LOOK
AFTER
SUZU.



INTRODUCING:
OIL ROUGE.
OUR BRAND-NEW
LIPSTICK WITH
AN INNOVATIVE
TEXTURE.

...SEEING
THAT GUY
TOMORROW.

WOW, THAT
GUY IS SO
PRETTY.

He's even
prettier than
the girl.

I'M...

THA-THUMP

WELL...

What am
I going
to wear?

...IT IS
AYASE-SAN.
THERE MAY
NOT BE ANY
DEEPER
MEANING
BEHIND THIS.

THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE DONE
ANYTHING
LIKE THIS.
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO!

BUT IS IT
REALLY
A DATE?

EXPECTING
SOMETHING
FROM HIM
AGAIN
WOULD
BE...

I
JUST
CAN'T!

I
CAN'T!

THA-
THUMP



...DOESN'T
AYASE-SAN
HAVE A
GIRLFRIEND
OR
SOMETHING
?

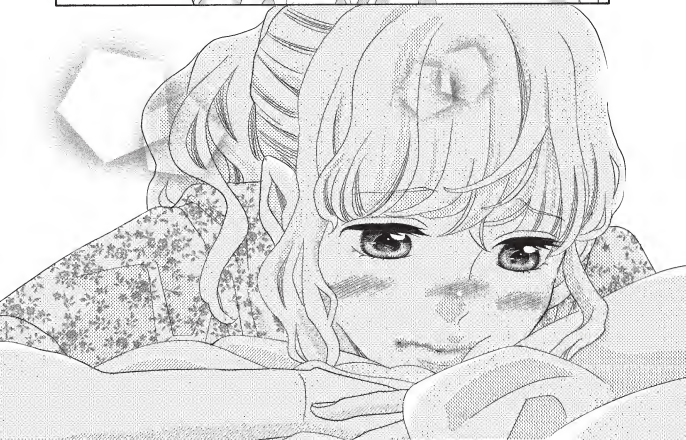
BESIDES
...

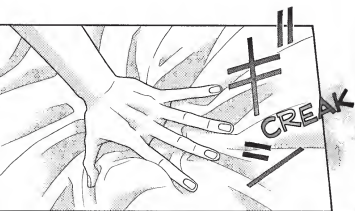


HE'S
SURROUNDED
BY SO MANY
BEAUTIFUL
ACTRESSES,
AND NOTHING'S
HAPPENED BETWEEN
THEM? IS THAT
EVEN POSSIBLE?

SLUMP
FWUMP
I # # #

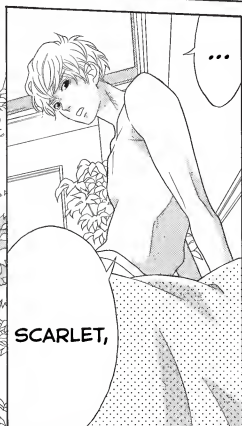
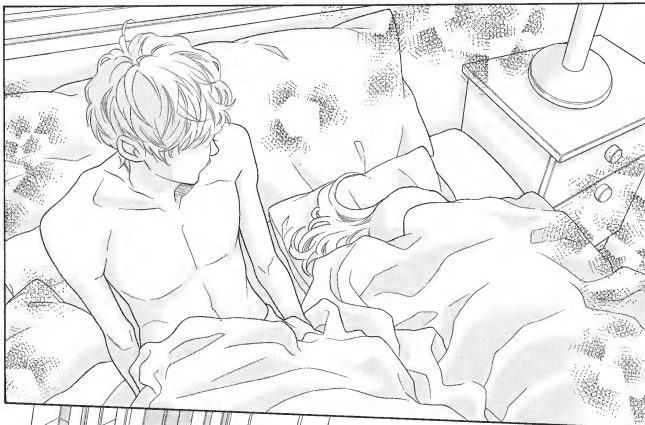
HE'S
SO, SO, SO
HOT, AFTER
ALL!





WHAT
AM I TO
AYASE-
SAN?





<MESSAGES>

AYASE-SAN

SENDER

I'll drive to the
station closest to
your house.
What's your stop?

WILL HE
BE ABLE
TO FIND
ME?

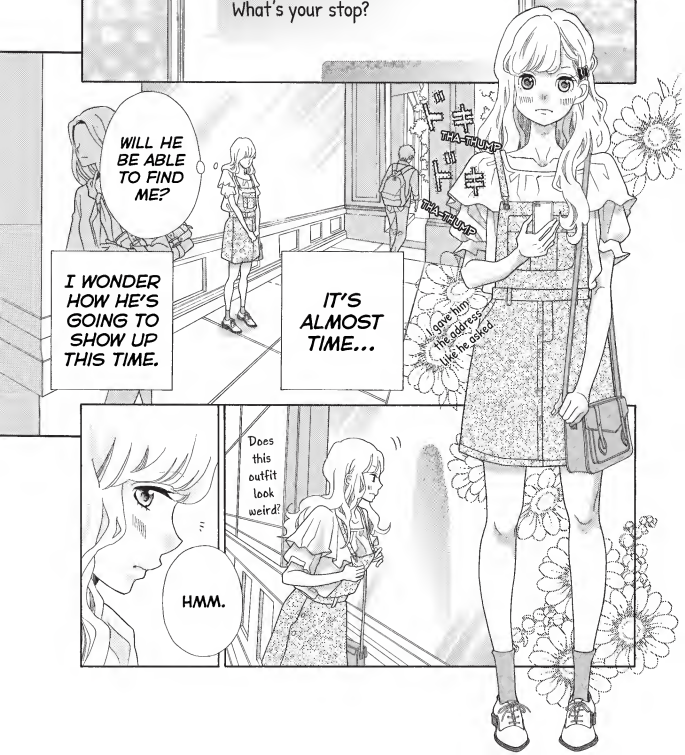
I WONDER
HOW HE'S
GOING TO
SHOW UP
THIS TIME.

IT'S
ALMOST
TIME...

I gave him
the address
like he asked

Does
this
outfit
look
weird?

HMM.





YEEEEAH...
MANNEQUINS
AREN'T SOFT
ENOUGH.

?!

IT'D BE
BETTER IF
THEY USED
SOME KIND
OF RUBBER
MATERIAL.

THIS IS
THE KIND
OF GUY
HE IS...

OH.

HEY
THERE.

THERE'S
NO POINT
IN EVEN
PEEPING!





YOU'VE
BASICALLY
GOT THE
PLACE TO
YOURSELVES
RIGHT NOW.

FIGURES.
THIS PLACE
IS A
GHOST
TOWN,
AS
USUAL.

I GET A
LOT OF
BUSINESS
AT NIGHT,
YOU
KNOW!



OH,
WELCOME,
KAEDE. I'VE
BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU TO
COME BACK.

'SUP.

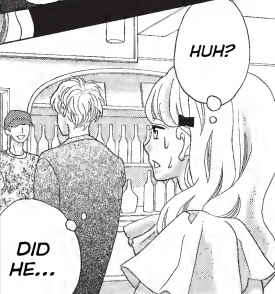


...I NEVER
SEE YOU
HERE WITH
ANYONE BUT
SCARLET.
THIS IS A
SURPRISE.

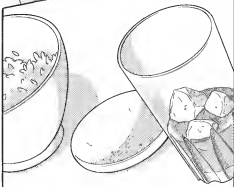


SO THIS
IS THE KIND
OF PLACE
HE COMES
TO...

IN ANY
CASE...



HUH?



...JUST
MENTION
THE NAME
OF SOME
FOREIGN
GIRL?

DID
HE...



IT'S JUST
THAT I
DON'T *HATE*
LEARNING.

THERE
ARE
PEOPLE
SMARTER
THAN ME
THERE.

WOW.

SO IF
YOU'RE A
STUDENT
COUNCIL
MEMBER,
YOU MUST
BE PRETTY
SMART,
RIGHT?

!

SO
ARE YOU
LEARNING
ANYTHING
SPECIAL?

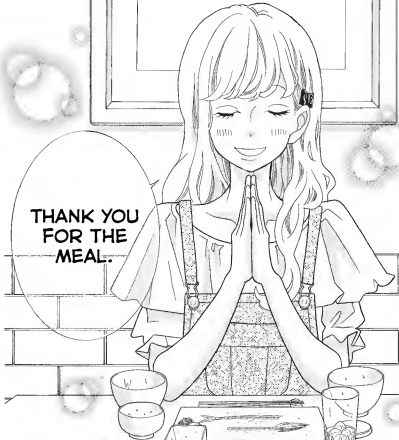
IN ANY
CASE,
THERE'S
NOTHING
VERY
IMPRESSION
ABOUT ME.

...

...I
USED TO
DO SOME
STUFF IN
THE PAST.

OH,
UH...

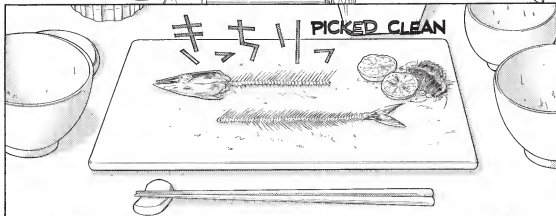
BUT NOT
ANYMORE
...



THANK YOU
FOR THE
MEAL.



CLAP



きりり PICKED CLEAN



OR SO
YOU SAY,
HUH?

7
HEH!!



NOTHING.
I'M GOING
TO THE
BATH-
ROOM.

OH.
OKAY.

WHAT?



BUT
YOU'RE NOT
SUPPOSED
TO ASK
CELEBRITIES
PERSONAL
QUESTIONS.

JINGLE
JANGLE



I'VE JUST
BEEN TALKING
ABOUT MYSELF.
WOULD IT BE
OKAY TO ASK
AYASE-SAN
ABOUT HIMSELF,
TOO?

YOU
CAN
TAKE
THAT
TABLE
RIGHT
THERE.

TABLE
FOR
TWO.

WELCOME.



HEY,
I HEARD THAT
KAEDE AYASE
COMES HERE
SOMETIMES.

CUSTOMERS!

GAH!

WHAT?
REALLY?

!!





LIKE
DITCHING
THE GROUP
BECAUSE HE
WANTED TO
DO HIS OWN
THING?

BECAUSE
HE'S
SELFISH.
ISN'T
HE THE
WORST?

HUH?
WHY
NOT?



BUT I
DON'T
REALLY
LIKE
KAEDE.

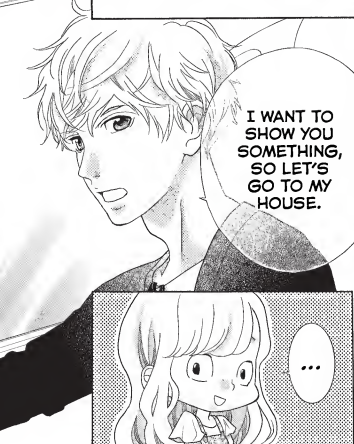
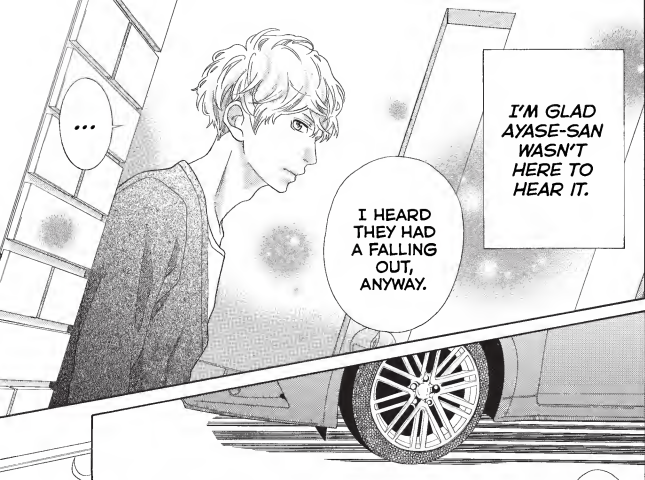
!

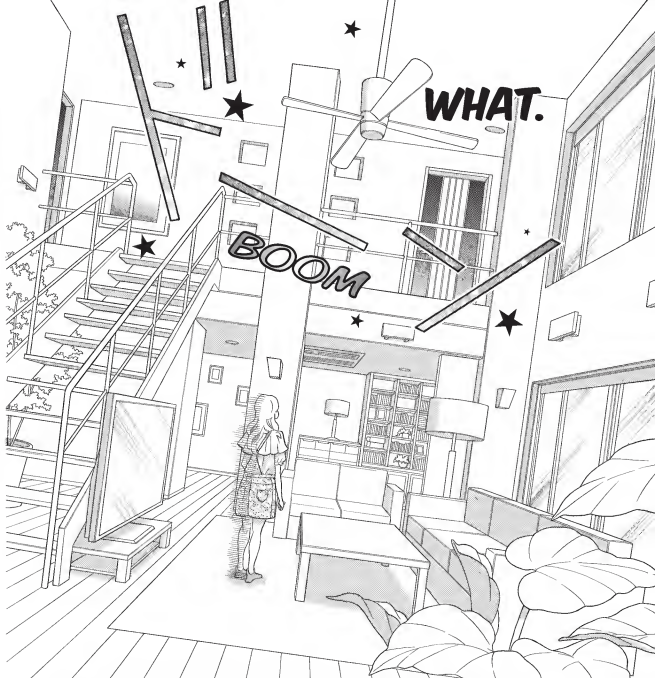
HE
ABANDONED
FUNNY BONE,
YOU KNOW.



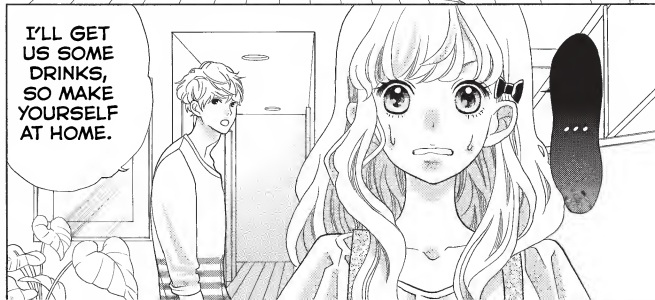
I'VE
HEARD
THE
RUMORS,
BUT SHE
DIDN'T
HAVE TO
SAY IT
LIKE
THAT.

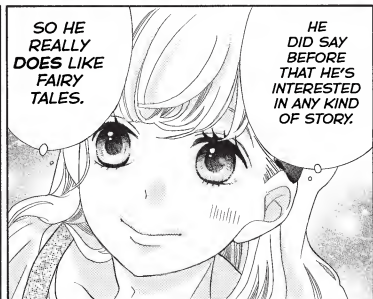
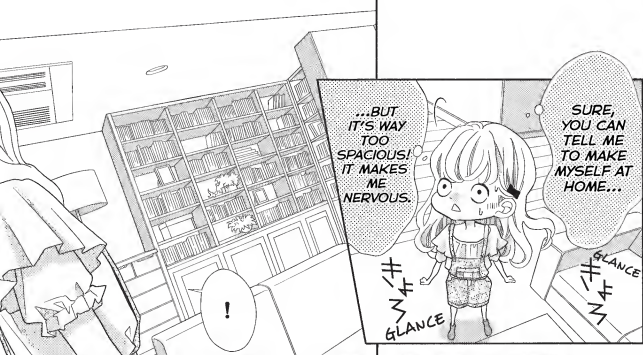
FUNNY
BONE IS
THE GROUP
THAT
AYASE-SAN
USED TO
BE IN.





I'LL GET
US SOME
DRINKS,
SO MAKE
YOURSELF
AT HOME.





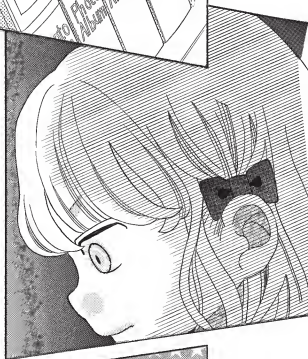


THERE SHE IS AGAIN.



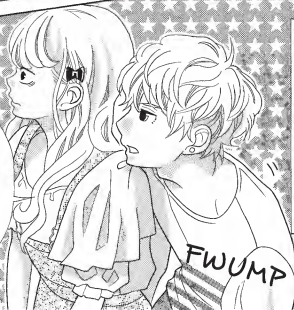
"SCARLET."

"I NEVER
SEE YOU
HERE WITH
ANYONE BUT
SCARLET."



**THE PORN
MAGS ARE
IN ANOTHER
ROOM, YOU
KNOW.**

THE ONES ABOUT
BUTTS, TOO.



**WHO
IN THE
WORLD
IS SHE
...?**



OKAY.

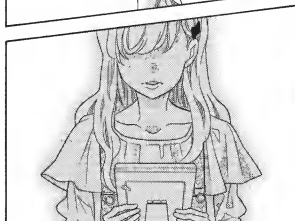
O-



I PUT
THE TEA
ON THE
TABLE,
SO LET'S
GO OVER
THERE.



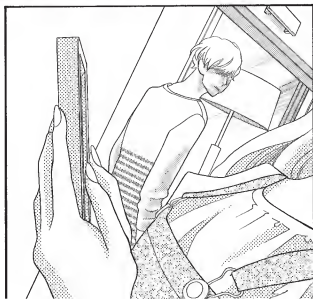
AHH!

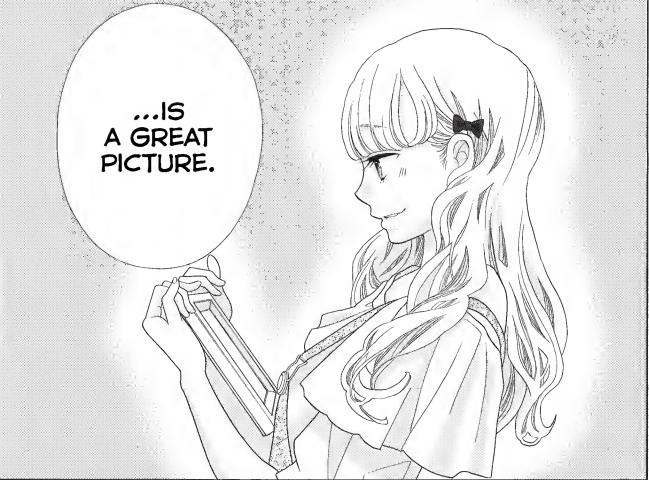


OH.



THIS...





...IS
A GREAT
PICTURE.

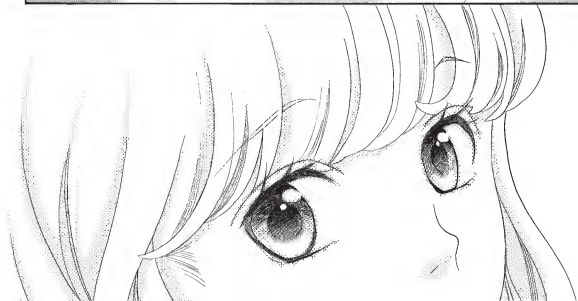
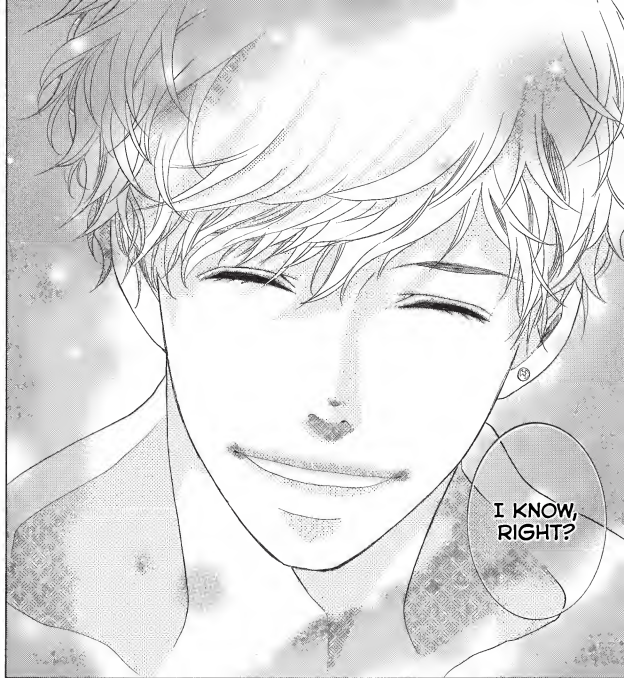


O-OH,
CRAP. I
BROUGHT
UP A
FORBIDDEN
TOPIC...

YEAH.



YOU
GUYS
LOOK LIKE
YOU'RE
HAVING
SO MUCH
FUN.

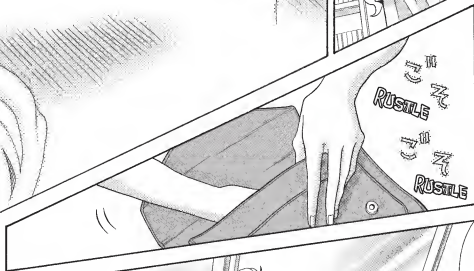




I REALLY
LIKE THAT
PICTURE.

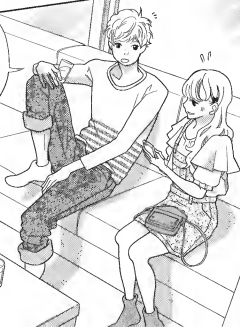


うん
RUSTLE
うん
RUSTLE



OH,
YEAH?

IS ONE
OF THEM
THE GIRL
YOU CAME
TO THE
TAPING
WITH?



OH,
BY THE
WAY...

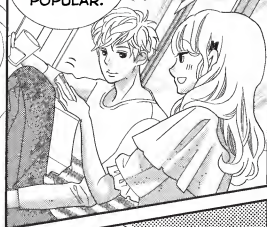
I HAVE
TWO
REALLY
IMPORTANT
FRIENDS,
TOO.





SHE'S BEEN MY BEST FRIEND SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL. SHE'S REALLY PRETTY AND SUPER POPULAR.

YEAH, HER NAME IS RUN-CHAN.



AND THE OTHER PERSON IS A GUY NAMED AH-CHAN.



WE LIVE CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, SO HE'S CLOSE WITH MY WHOLE FAMILY.



AH-CHAN AND I ARE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS. HE'S IN A BAND.

MY
PARENTS
BOTH WORK,
SO AH-CHAN
HAS HELPED
ME OUT WITH
A LOT OF
STUFF.

...

?!

I'm just
talking
about
myself
again.

Oh!

すし
ZWHUD
し

YOU'VE
GOT A GUY
YOU'RE
REALLY
CLOSE
WITH...

??

Hey,
you're
heavy.

WH-

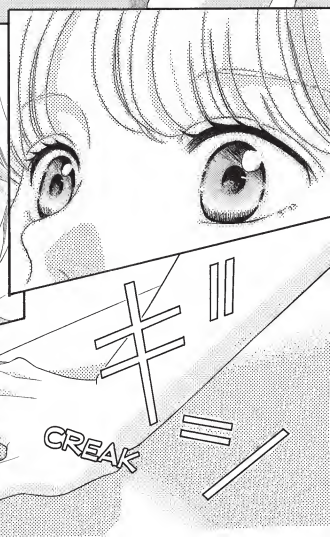
WHAT
IS IT?



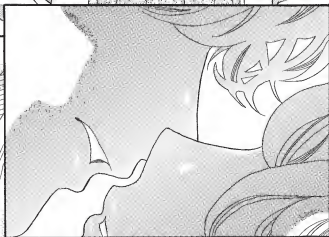
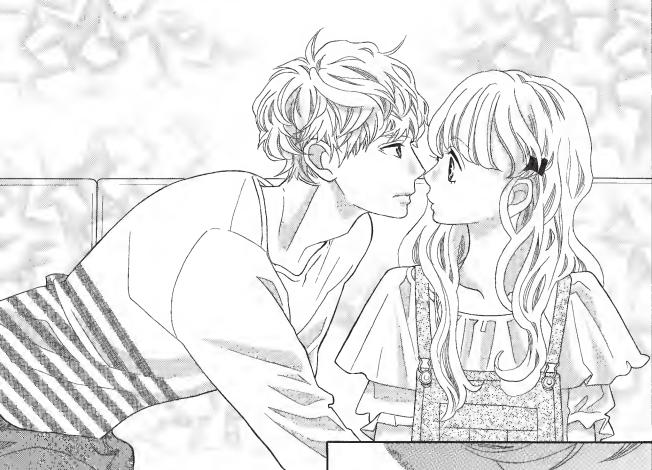
...EVEN
THOUGH
YOU'RE
MINE.



HUH?



CREAK



OH.

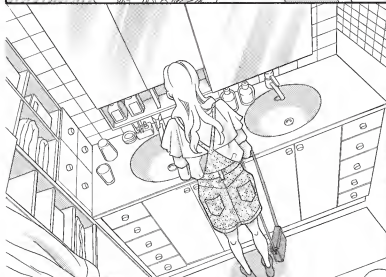
YOU'VE
GOT AN
EYELASH
UNDER
YOUR
EYE.

IT'S THE
FIRST DOOR
IN THE
HALLWAY.

OKAY,
IF
YOU'LL
EXCUSE
ME...!

HUH?

OH, MY
APOLOGIES!
MAY I USE
YOUR
RESTROOM?



SHUT

THIS
IS BAD.
I HAVE
TO CALM
DOWN.

BECAUSE
...

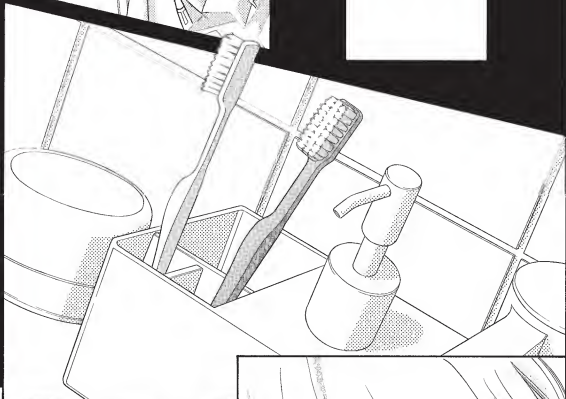


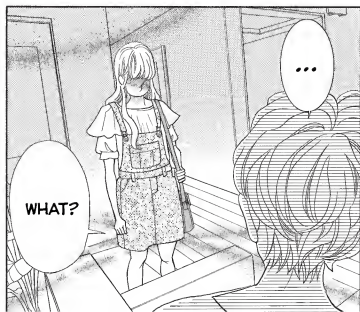
I THOUGHT
HE WAS
ABOUT TO
K-K-K-KISS
ME!!!

TH-TH-TH-
THAT TOOK
ME BY
SURPRISE!



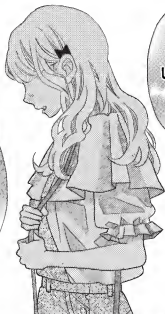
**...WHO
IS THIS
SCARLET
PERSON?**







...I'M
GOING
TO GO
HOME.



UM...



BUT
THERE'S
SOMETHING
I WANT TO
SHOW
YOU.

NO
REASON.



HUH?

HEY,
WAIT A
SECOND.
WHY?

WHY DON'T
YOU SHOW IT
TO SCARLET
INSTEAD?!



OH,
REALLY?

THE
SCARLET
YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT
JUST GOT
HOME.

OH.

?!

DING
DONG

NO
WAY!

PANIC
✂ ✂ ✂

WH-
WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?

WAIT
HERE A
SECOND.

WHOA.
DON'T
SUDDENLY
JUMP ALL
OVER
ME.

WELCOME
HOME.

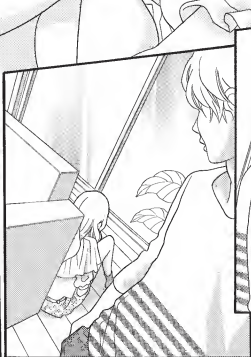
I SHOULD
PROBABLY
HIDE,
RIGHT?!



I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S THE KIND OF PERSON...

...WHO COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS SO EASILY.

THE SHOWER? SURE, GO AHEAD. YOU CAN USE IT.



YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA.

IT'S QUIET NOW...

THIS IS PROBABLY A GOOD TIME TO LEAVE...



LET ME
INTRODUCE
YOU.

THIS IS MY
BELOVED DOG,
SCARLET.

A DOG?!

I HAD
HER GO
TO THE
GROOMER.

Whaaaaaa?!

I WANTED
YOU TO MEET
HER, SO I
THOUGHT I'D
BETTER MAKE
HER PRETTY
FIRST.

WOOF!

SO...

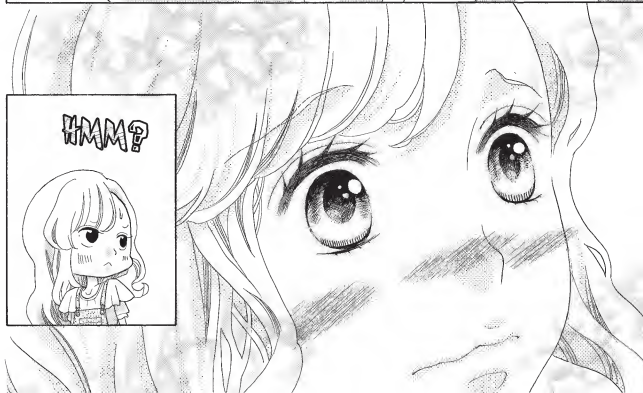
LICK LICK LICK LICK LICK LICK LICK LICK

...

...LET'S
SPEND
A LITTLE
MORE TIME
TOGETHER,
HINANA.



HMM?





OH,
THAT.

B-BUT
YOU HAVE
TWO
BATHROBES
AND TWO
TOOTH-
BRUSHES...

!!

!! RUB
V

!! RUB
V

THOSE
BELONG
TO
MY MANAGER,
SHIGE-CHAN.

PHEW.



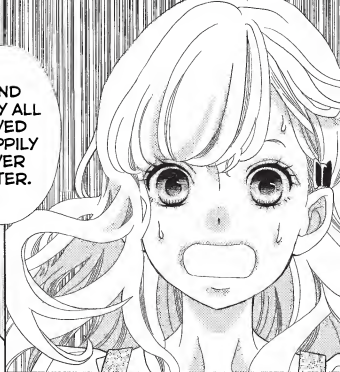
RIGHT?
YOU COME
AND STAY
OVER AT
MY PLACE
A LOT.

AND IN
EXCHANGE,
HE WATCHES
SCARLET
FOR ME
SOMETIMES.

!



AND
THEY ALL
LIVED
HAPPILY
EVER
AFTER.



NO...

HUH?
DID I DO
SOMETHING
WRONG?

WHAT
THE
HELL IS
GOING
ON
HERE?!

...THIS ISN'T HAPPILY EVER AFTER AT ALL.

TO BE CONTINUED IN
KISS ME AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT
VOLUME 2



COMMENT

Hello, nice to meet you!
This time around, I decided
to take on the great challenge of
tackling a story purely focused on
Cinderella, nothing extra.
I really hope you have fun reading it!
Thank you for your ongoing support.

RIP MIKIMOTO

AFTERWORD

SO, HOW DID YOU LIKE IT?

NANA WASN'T MODELED AFTER ANYONE IN PARTICULAR, BUT IF I HAD TO PICK SOMEONE, I'D SAY SHE WAS BASED ON PEOPLE—JUST LIKE YOU—WHO HAVE CELEBRITY CRUSHES!

OF COURSE, I ALSO HAVE CELEBRITY CRUSHES. SO GOING FORWARD, I'M GOING TO *REALLY* SUMMON MY FANGIRLING-FANTASIZING POWERS TO TRANSFORM KAEDE!

PLEASE LOOK AFTER DEAR NANA AND KAEDE IN THE FUTURE, TOO!

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN IN VOLUME 2. FAREWELL!

6.2015

-RIN MIKIMOTO

TWITTER: @RINMIKIRIN

Special thanx

S.sato H.saijyo M.kawai

M.takayashiki K.kaneko

Every one of the staff,
everyone in the editorial department,
Horiuchi-sama,

Morita-san, Saiki-san,
arcoinc Kusume-sama

&U

I LOVE YOU

TRANSLATION NOTES

GOLDEN WEEK BREAK, P.17

In Japan, Golden Week is a holiday vacation from April 29th to early May.

BUTT ALIEN, P.32

In Japan, it is common to jokingly tack on "-*seijin*" ("-Alien") at the end of a word, in reference to a person who is obsessed with something beyond "regular people's" standards. The word "*seijin*" literally means "a being from another planet."

VARIETY SHOW, P.117

Variety shows are live TV shows that feature many segments. This can include interviews, musical numbers, games, skits, contests, quizzes, and much more. Shows like these are common in Japan, and are hosted by announcers and famous celebrities.

OSHARE IZUMI AND SEKAI GYOTEN SCOOP, P.119

Oshare Izumi is a reference to a famous Japanese variety and talk show called *Oshare Izumi*, which has been running since 2005. *Oshare* means "stylish" and *Izumi* is the transliteration of the English suffix "-ism." *Sekai Gyoten Scoop* is a reference to the documentary-style variety show called *The Sekai Gyoten News*, which has been on TV since 2001.

GRAVURE, P.121

In Japan, the usage of "gravure" comes from the English term "rotogravure," a printing process often used for printing images in magazines. Now, "gravure" in Japan most commonly refers to "gravure models/idols" and "gravure magazines" which feature suggestive photos of young women. Though the gravure industry is aimed at older audiences, it is mainly non-explicit in content. It centers on young women posing in swim suits, building an appealing public persona, and selling photobooks and merchandise. Gravure idols are just like any other celebrity in the entertainment industry, and the label itself is quite fluid.

THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL, P.162

Hinana says "*gochisousamadeshita*," in the original Japanese. When eating a meal in Japan, it is custom to say "*itadakimasu*" when beginning the meal, and "*gochisousama*" (or the more formal version that Hinana said) after finishing the meal. While "*itadakimasu*" has come to simply mean "let's eat," the original meaning translates to "I will gratefully accept this food" and by extension, "life." This is because every time someone eats food, it sustains them and gives them life, which was taken from another life (like plants and animals).



Having lost his wife, high school teacher Kōhei Inuzuka is doing his best to raise his young daughter Tsumugi as a single father. He's pretty bad at cooking and doesn't have a huge appetite to begin with, but chance brings his little family together with one of his students, the lonely Kotori. The three of them are anything but comfortable in the kitchen, but the healing power of home cooking might just work on their grieving hearts.

"This season's number-one feel-good anime!" —Anime News Network

"A beautifully-drawn story about comfort food and family and grief. Recommended." —Otaku USA Magazine



sweetness & lightning

KC
KODANSHA
COMICS

By Gido Amagakure

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"I'm pleasantly surprised to find modern shojo using cross-dressing as a dramatic device to deliver social commentary... Recommended."

-Otaku USA
Magazine



The prince in his dark days

By **Hico Yamanaka**

A drunkard for a father, a household of poverty... For 17-year-old Atsuko, misfortune is all she knows and believes in. Until one day, a chance encounter with Itaru—the wealthy heir of a huge corporation—changes everything. The two look identical, uncannily so. When Itaru curiously goes missing, Atsuko is roped into being his stand in. There, in his shoes, Atsuko must parade like a prince in a palace. She encounters many new experiences, but at what cost...?

Japan's most
powerful spirit
medium delves
into the ghost
world's greatest
mysteries!

Story by Kyo
Shirodaira, famed
author of mystery
fiction and creator of
Spiral, *Blast of Tempest*,
and *The Record of a
Fallen Vampire*.



Both touched by spirits called yōkai, Kotoko and Kurō have gained unique superhuman powers. But to gain her powers Kotoko has given up an eye and a leg, and Kurō's personal life is in shambles. So when Kotoko suggests they team up to deal with renegades from the spirit world, Kurō doesn't have many other choices, but Kotoko might just have a few ulterior motives...

IN/SPECTRE

STORY BY KYO SHIRODAIRA
ART BY CHASHIBA KATASE

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Kiss Me At the Stroke of Midnight 1

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